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MAR 8 '43

THE

WORKS

OF

MRS. CHAPONE:

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

CONTAINING

I. LETTERS ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIND.
II. MISCELLANIES.
III. CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. RICHARDSON.
IV. LETTERS TO MISS CARTER.
V. FUGITIVE PIECES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

AN ACCOUNT OF HER LIFE AND CHARACTER,

DRAWN UP

BY HER OWN FAMILY.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY W. WELLS AND T. B. WAIT AND CO.
Court-street.
1809.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
263341B
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
B 1814 L

Printed by T. B. Wait & Co.
Boston.

PREFACE.

THE preface to a book may in some measure be compared to the prologue to a play, which, though it presume not to bespeak the unqualified approbation of the audience, yet tends to deprecate the mortification of severe censure.

In like manner, the editors of the following pages, though far from expecting unanimous applause, are yet willing to hope that the productions of a pen so unsullied, and the genuine display of a character so respectable as that of Mrs. Chapone, will maintain their ground on the present stage of English literature.

The custom at present prevails of publishing every relique of persons who have been in any degree eminent. Private letters, never intended by their writers for the inspection of any, but those to whom they were addressed, form collections for

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the public eye. It is hoped this will plead the editors' apology for following the taste, and falling in with the feelings of the times.

But there are circumstances that, in their opinion, are necessary to be stated, because they fixed the determination to publish these volumes.

All thoughts of printing Mrs. Chapone's correspondence with Mr. Richardson, on the subject of filial obedience, had been given up by her family, on account of its having been suggested that the sentiments contained in these letters were not adapted to an age in which parental authority and filial obedience are so much relaxed as in the present. The few near relations that now survive her, therefore, were fearful of doing more injury than credit to the fame of one, whose memory will ever by them be held too sacred to risk the possibility of drawing the censure of the public upon any of her writings, by an injudicious publication.

In reply to this it was urged that nothing was asserted in these letters militating against implicit filial obedience in all instances where duty to a superior authority did not interpose, and that even with respect to marriage, the parent was entitled to a negative, though not to a positive command. It was also urged, that no one could read them without recollecting they were written more than half a century ago; a period wherein many parents seemed really to suppose that parental authority extended to a right to control the affections, as well as to regulate the actions of their children; and that these letters were addressed to a person, who, both in his public writings, and (as it has been affirmed) in his private character, carried these notions to the most rigid extreme.

Feeling then the objection in a great measure, if not wholly, removed by this reasoning, the relations of Mrs. Chapone have been prevailed upon to comply with the earnest solicitations of many of her

most intimate friends, and warmest admirers, in giving them to the press.

Such language and such arguments as these letters contain, can hardly fail to excite admiration, if not to afford considerable gratification in the perusal, when the reader recollects that they come from the pen of a lady, who at the age of twenty-two, with very few of the slender advantages of the education even of that moment, had discernment to detect, and courage to combat the errors of a work received with so general, nay, even enthusiastic approbation as the "History of Clarissa Harlowe."

The matrimonial creed, with the other fugitive pieces, produced at different times, as they mark the versatility of her genius, and the playfulness of her fancy, were judged not unfit to form a part of this little compilation.

A life, spent by choice in retirement, is not likely to afford many anecdotes, or furnish many events worthy of record. Such, it must be acknowledged, was the life of Mrs. Chapone; and it is but justice to de-

clare that this memoir of it would not have been offered to the world, had not a writing, miscalled her life, already appeared. The narrative here alluded to was written without the sanction of her relations; and published in open defiance of the remonstrances of her friends; being prefixed to a new edition of her "Letters on the Mind."

The only judicious part of that production is, its being so prefixed; as that has given it a chance (which it otherwise never could have obtained) of being read; for excepting the circumstances that she was born, that she was married to Mr. Chapone, and that she died, it contains scarcely a single sentence that has any foundation in truth from the beginning to the end.

The immaterial circumstances guessed at, and put together in this singular piece of biography, though generally incorrect, would never have been considered as worthy of the time or trouble of notice, had not the editors, for want of information, thought fit to substitute invention for fact, and to exhibit her character in so deform-

THE

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. CHAPONE.

THOMAS MULSO, Esq. of Twywell, in the county of Northampton, the father of Mrs. Chapone, was, at the time of her birth, the only son of the representative of a family established in that county before the reign of Edward the First, and originally possessed of landed property, in that and the adjacent counties, to the amount of eight thousand pounds a-year; but of which, from alienation, by means of heiresses, and other causes, only an inconsiderable portion remains to the present possessor.

In the year 1719 he married the posthumous daughter of Colonel Thomas, of the guards, usually distinguished by the appellation of "the handsome Thomas."

Mr. Mulso had two sisters, the elder of whom, Anne, was married to the Rev. Dr. Donne, prebendary of Canterbury; the youngest, Susanna, to the brother of Mrs. Mulso, the Rev. Dr. John Thomas, who was several years preceptor to his present majesty, and through the bounty of George

the Second, and of his royal pupil, held successively the bishoprics of Peterborough, Salisbury, and Winchester.

Mr. and Mrs. Mulso had a numerous family of children, five only of whom lived to grow up; and of those five, Charles, the third son, an officer in the navy, died in the Mediterranean, at the age of 21.

Thomas, the eldest son, was bred to the law, and accompanied his father several years on the Oxford circuit; but resigned all practice on coming to possession of the paternal estate; he was afterwards made registrar of Peterborough, and a commissioner of bankrupts.

John, the second son, was a prebendary of the cathedrals of Winchester and Salisbury, and held two valuable livings in the county of Hampshire.

Edward, the youngest, had a place in the excise office, and died suddenly of an apoplectic seizure in April 1782.

On the respective characters of these three brothers, it might here be thought allowable to dwell much more at large, were it intended that this narrative should include the life of more than one of the family; but although each possessed qualities and talents well deserving that honourable mention should be made of him, we shall at present confine ourselves to the avowed subject of these memoirs.

Hester Mulso, was born on the 27th of October, 1727, and was the only daughter who reached maturity.

At a very early age she exhibited proofs of uncommon genius, and facility of apprehension. With an imagination peculiarly lively, and a temper equally warm and ardent, her young mind was more impressed and delighted by the works of fancy, than perhaps was quite consistent with due judgment, and her attachments more enthusiastic than might be compatible with her happiness.

Romances appear to have been the favourite reading of females at that period; and it is not to be wondered at that this young lady, influenced by the example of those around her, should have read with avidity works so alluring in their composition, though so little instructive in their tendency, or beneficial in their effects. Useless, however, as such a study might have been to the generality of youthful readers, it was not wholly unproductive of advantage to her, for at nine years old she herself composed a romance, called "The Loves of Amoret and Melissa," in which, though the defects of style were of course such as would be expected from a child of that age, such fertility of invention, and extraordinary specimens of genius, were displayed, as laid the foundation of that respect, and that admiration of her talents, to which her subsequent character and writings *so fully* entitled her.

Such an understanding could not long be seduced by the absurdities of extravagant fictions. She soon turned with disgust from pursuits so unprofitable, and eagerly sought every opportunity of cultivating and improving her mind.

But besides the disadvantage of living in an age when the education of women was so little attended to, Miss Mulso had some domestic discouragements to contend against. Her mother, who was a woman of uncommon beauty, and whose quickness of intellect was equal to her personal charms, was not without a proportionate share of vanity, and a consequent disposition to jealousy, naturally (or, in this instance, it may be said unnaturally) attached to that vanity. Accustomed to be almost the sole object of admiration and flattery, in whatever society she entered, she felt unwilling to relinquish any portion of that incense which she had fed upon so long.

In her daughter she found, indeed, no rival of her beauty, but she discovered a competitor in her talents, that even maternal affection did not teach her to yield to with complacency, and she was perhaps more tempted to withhold, than to bestow the assistance and instruction that she was so well qualified to afford her.

Let not this account unguardedly injure the memory of this, otherwise, really excellent woman. She had many admirable qualities to counterba-

lance this one unfortunate weakness; and even for this some allowance must be made, from the excessive indulgence of an adoring husband, and a continued course of ill health, which together contributed to alter and sour a disposition originally amiable and respectable.

To the latter circumstance, indeed, may chiefly be ascribed the little attention she seemed disposed to bestow on a child who would so amply have rewarded any pains she had taken for her improvement. Her continual sufferings, in a great measure, unfitted her for the arduous task of education, and her daughter, who never failed to pay her every mark of affection and respect, was deprived of her at a time of life, when, to the generality of young women, the loss of a mother would be considered as irreparable.

From this period might be dated the commencement of the most important circumstances of Miss Mulso's life. At the same time that she took upon herself the management of her father's house she also undertook the cultivation of her own understanding; and by dint of active exertion, and successful application, gained those mental improvements that secured to her that subsequent distinguished and admired rank in the literary world, which she was universally acknowledged to support. Though chiefly self-taught, she was nearly mistress of the French and Italian lan-

guages, and even made some proficiency in the Latin tongue.

Her studies were useful as well as elegant. She not only read, but reflected; and so acute was her judgment, that no disguise of flowing diction, or ornamented style, could mislead it. At an age when, perhaps, few readers are capable of very deep discrimination, she would scrutinize and controvert every point in which her own opinions did not acquiesce. That she read the Holy Scriptures both with delight and benefit to herself, her excellent directions for the study of them in her letters is a sufficient testimony.

She had a turn for both poetry and philosophy; but whether it were that from the sanguineness of her temper, she loved to look on the bright side of every object, and consequently shrank with dissatisfaction from the unpleasing picture of human nature that truth exhibited, or from some other unknown cause, certain it is she never till towards the latter part of her life, could bring herself to relish the reading of history.

She was careful to select her acquaintance amongst persons from whom she could derive profit as well as pleasure, and it was probably owing to her enthusiastic admiration of genius, and desire of seizing every possible opportunity of improvement, that she became, for a time, one of the worshippers of Mr. Richardson. But even the

acknowledged authority of the celebrated writer of Clarissa could not obscure the clearness of her perception, nor check the ardour of investigation. The letters on the subject of parental authority and filial obedience, which make part of this publication, will prove with what ingenuity she could assert, and with what dignity, tempered with proper humility, she could maintain her own well-grounded opinions.

Amongst those who composed the circle of Mr. Richardson's friends, was Mr. Chapone, a young gentleman then practising the law in the Temple, for whom, from their first introduction, Miss Mulso appears to have entertained a distinguished esteem. As their intimacy improved, her attachment became rooted, and she had the gratification to perceive that it was mutual. But before Mr. Chapone had made any declaration, she felt it incumbent upon her to apprize her father of the state of her heart. He was too indulgent rigidly to discourage what prudence forbade him to approve. He exacted a promise from her, that she would not enter into any engagement without his previous permission, a promise to which she religiously adhered.

Mr. Mulso at length perceiving that their esteem for each other obviously increased upon a farther acquaintance, no longer prohibited their forming an engagement, though, from pecuniary

difficulties, there was but little prospect of its concluding in a speedy union.

Miss Mulso passed this period of her life in a state of content and tranquillity, for which she never failed to express a pious gratitude, both in her conversation with, and her letters to, all her intimate friends. Excepting the circumstance of a weakly constitution, which seldom allowed her the enjoyment of full health, she had little interruption to her happiness.

She lived with a father whom she tenderly loved, and was, with his consent and approbation, frequently indulged in the society of a lover, for whom the ardour of her affection never experienced a moment's abatement, from its earliest commencement*.

Her winters were always spent in London, in a circle of chosen and highly valued friends, amongst whom the Rev. Mr. Burrows and his sisters ranked the foremost. To this family she was indebted for some of the brighest hours of her prosperity, and on them she almost wholly reposed for comfort and kind alleviation in those of sorrow and distress, which afterwards awaited her. Indeed, it will

* Mr. Richardson, in one of his letters, speaks of Mr. Chapone as being likely to go abroad. Whether or not he ever had such an intention, cannot now be ascertained; but certain it is, that he never did go out of England for a single day during any part of his life.

appear in the course of this narrative, that from the small part of that family whom she had not the misfortune to survive, was chiefly derived the source of the limited share of pleasure or satisfaction that she was capable of tasting at the close of her life.

Miss Mulso, both from her natural talents and elegant acquirements, was peculiarly qualified to shine in society, and her company was coveted by all who had ever shared in the charms of her conversation. Added to the superiority her excellent understanding gave her, she was mistress of so ample a fund of humour, joined with an innate cheerfulness, as rendered her a most entertaining and desirable companion to all ages, as well as to both sexes.

Her musical talents also were such as occasioned her to be eagerly sought after by those who were lovers of real harmony. Though totally uninstructed, her voice was so sweet and powerful, her natural taste so exquisite, and her ear so accurate, that without any scientific knowledge, she would give a force of expression to Handel's compositions, that long practice, and professional skill, often failed to produce.

In summer her time was usually divided between the different country habitations of her family. Sometimes at the residence of her second brother, who was then vicar of Sunbury in Middlesex;

sometimes at the episcopal palace at Peterborough, during the time her uncle was bishop of that diocese;* but more frequently at Canterbury, in the house of her eldest aunt, Mrs. Donne, who had been a widow some years. Here, though in other respects it does not appear to have been a favourite place of residence, she obtained an acquisition to her happiness, which she cherished with partiality to the end of her life, and considered as the chief pride and boast of it. This was the acquaintance of Miss Eliza Carter; a lady whose fame can admit of no addition from the efforts of so feeble a pen, and therefore it is not intended that an inadequate tribute of praise should be offered to her character, but simply to speak of her as the friend of Miss Mulso.

These young ladies seem to have been united by mutual approbation from the moment they were first made known to each other. Miss Mulso was then little more than twenty, Miss Carter some years older; and though their sentiments were not exactly similar upon all subjects, the occasionally overstrained imagination, and enthusiastic feelings of the former, were so happily checked by the soli-

* It it supposed the editors of the "Life of Mrs. Chapone," already published, have mistaken the bishop for Lord Peterborough, in whose house they state Miss Mulso to have passed some time. Neither she, nor any of her family, ever had the honor of being acquainted with that nobleman.

dity and deeper experience of the latter, that probably there have existed few instances of a friendship commenced at so early an age, so strongly cemented, and so unalterably continued, during a course of more then fifty years.

Miss Carter was so engrossed by affection and attention to her own family, and by the extent of her literary pursuits, that no room seems to have been left for ties of a more tender nature. This was a frequent point of lively debate between the two friends; and Miss Mulso, who had contracted that ardent attachment which no impediments could dissolve, would humorously abuse the "square cornered heart" of her friend, which precluded her participating in the favourite sentiment of her soul.

The life of Miss Mulso was now passed in a regular routine, that furnished no incidents to be recorded, excepting some of the early productions of her pen, which, though at the time of writing, they were solely intended for private perusal, have since been given to the public. Among the first of these were the Ode to Peace, and that addressed to her friend on her intended publication of the translation of Epictetus.

About the same time also the story of Fidelia was written; but though composed purposely for the Adventurer, such was the timidity of the author, that nothing but the earnest persuasions of Miss Carter, and of all those friends to whose inspec-

tion she submitted it, could have prevailed upon her to take courage to send it to the press.

It would indeed have been a subject for serious regret, had this incomparable story been suppressed, which, besides the ingenuity of the invention, contains so important a lesson against the sophistry of scepticism, and exemplifies in so beautiful and touching a manner, the blessed effects of the Christian doctrines, in language so elegant, and unadulterated, that those readers must be either very weak, or incorrigibly hardened, who could fail to be sensibly impressed by it*.

Various circumstances prevented the two friends from spending so much of their time together as they mutually wished: but they kept up a constant intercourse of writing, which served to heighten their esteem, and to confirm their regard for each other. Several extracts from the letters of Miss Mulso have been selected, which it will not be improper to introduce in this place.

* The editors of the life before alluded to, have thought fit to make some singular comments upon this story; accusing it of affectation in the style, and of being more calculated to injure than promote the cause for which it was written. What motive they could possibly have for so extraordinary a criticism, excepting the literally *want of something better to say*, we must leave it to themselves to discover.

LETTER I.

September 11, 1749.

"I CANNOT too soon take advantage of the kind permission dear Miss Carter has given me to begin a correspondence which will afford me so much pleasure; and I will do it without fear, since I have as much reason to confide in her good-nature, as to revere her judgment. I shall still find in her that amiable condescension, and unreserved benevolence which endears her conversation, and enhances the value of her understanding; which teaches her how to improve her companions without appearing to instruct them, to correct without seeming to reprove, and even to reprove without offending.

"I parted from you, dear madam, with more regret than I dared shew; for I could not expect that you should have believed me sincere, had I expressed all the esteem and affection I felt for you, since I could hardly, myself, comprehend how so short an acquaintance should have produced so warm an attachment: but why do I call it a short acquaintance? I have known you long, and long honoured and esteemed you; but it is only since I had the pleasure of conversing with you that I have loved you, because fame could never have conveyed to me any idea of the engagingness of your manner and disposition, though it had raised in me a just opinion of your worth and abilities.

"I heard with great concern of your being extremely ill after you went from Canterbury, but had the satisfaction of hearing from Miss ———, the day before I came away, that you were much better. I hope you are by this time quite recovered. Are you careful enough of your health? Yes, surely you are; for however deaf you may be to self-love, or however partial in your regard to your mind, in preference to your body, yet I am certain your good-nature cannot suffer you to be insensible to the concern of your friends, to whom your welfare is so very important."

LETTER II.

November 15.

"I AM extremely sorry to hear that you have suffered so much from your own illness, and your papa's, but hope you, by this time, taste that additional happiness which arises from a comparison of present ease and joy with past pains and sorrows. I don't know whether the unspeakable satisfaction of such a reflection is not alone a sufficient compensation for a great share of affliction, and whether transient sufferings may not be deemed blessings in this view alone, (apart from the more important ends which are answered by them,) as they awaken our attention to the common benefits we enjoy, or rather which we too often possess without enjoy-

ing, and endear those pleasures which use had rendered too indifferent to us. The absence or sickness of our friends enhances their value, and we receive them as new presents from Providence, with redoubled tenderness and joy, when they are restored to us. Health, which is generally considered only as a negative happiness, becomes the source of ten thousand positive pleasures, when it is recommended by a comparison with the languor and terrors of sickness. I hope I may congratulate you on a return of health and joy, which I am sure you will not fail to improve by reflecting properly on it. Give me leave to assure you of my sincerest good wishes for every thing that may increase or ensure your happiness.

"You are extremely obliging in the praises you bestow on my little ode. Don't accuse me of insincerity about it, for I assure you I spoke of it as I thought: you have it, however, in a less imperfect state than it was first produced in, Mr. —— having taken the pains to point out to me some of its defects, which I amended by his advice. For my own part, I was not at all inclined to take any trouble about it, had not he, with some difficulty, persuaded me it was worth mending: its correctness, therefore, (if it is correct, for that I am not qualified to judge of) you must impute to Mr. —— exactness; an exactness which I was almost tempted to grumble at, as it

put me upon the difficulty of altering; for you, who are a work-woman as well as a writer, know well that it is much pleasanter to make than to mend."

LETTER III.

January 10, 1750.

"WHAT a wretch am I, that I must begin every letter to dear Miss Carter with an apology! How ungrateful must I have appeared in making no return to her kind indulgence! Yet, as much as I want an excuse for my laziness, I can make no use of that which you have so humbly furnished me with. You have a right to think me a strange inconsistent creature, but you must not think me so tasteless as not to be highly delighted with your letters, though I have hitherto been so dilatory in expressing the great pleasure you have given me. Your regular way of life, dear madam, whilst it is a most edifying example to others, is far from damping your genius, or making you less capable of entertaining, as well as instructing, your distant friends. The common chit-chat of the world is what one may every where meet with, and every where be tired with; but where shall we meet with the enlivened good sense, the happy mixture of vivacity and solidity of genius and judgment which so re-

markably shines in all that Miss Carter writes! Do not, then, impute my silence to any but the true cause. I would not tell you what that is, if I did not know that you have already heard of it from Mr. ——. The truth is, then, that I have been engaged in a kind of amicable controversy with my honoured friend Mr. Richardson, which has occasioned letters of so immoderate a length between us, that I have indeed been quite tired of pen and ink, and inexcusably negligent of all my other correspondents. Does it not sound strange, my dear Miss Carter, that a girl like me should have dared to engage in a dispute with such a man? Don't you begin to despise me as an arrogant, self-conceited creature? Indeed, I have often wondered at my own assurance, but the pleasure and improvement I expected from his letters were motives too strong to be resisted, and the kind encouragement he gave me got the better of my fear of exposing myself.

"I am going to give you a fresh proof of my assurance, and of my dependence on your good-nature. Mr. —— gave me the pleasure of hearing him read the last ode you sent him, and, miser like, I could not admire its excellence without wishing for the possession of it: however, I did not dare to ask him for it, as I feared he could not comply with my request without breach of trust. May I beg the favour of a copy from you? and won't you think me the boldest girl that ever

lived? Indeed I am charmed beyond measure with this ode, and far beyond my power of praising. As fond as I am of the works of fancy, of the bold imagery of a Shakespear, or a Milton, and the delicate landscapes of Thomson, I receive much greater and more solid pleasure from their poetry, as it is the dress and ornament of wisdom and morality, than all the flowers of fancy and the charms of harmonious numbers can give,

"When gay description holds the place of sense."

Your works, my dear Miss Carter, like the orange tree, bear flowers and fruit at the same time, and satisfy the understanding while they charm the imagination."

LETTER IV.

March 25.

"I WAS much mortified and conscience-struck on Saturday morning, when your brother was so obliging as to call on me to ask if I would send a letter to you by him, who was going into Kent the next day. I had not time to write, having engagements for the whole day, but felt myself so ashamed of not having done it sooner, that I resolved not to let this post go away without a letter to dear Miss Carter, whose kind complaint of me to Mr. —— gave me pleasure and confusion at the same time. I send you enclosed, as a

peace-offering, the ode you are so obliging to ask for. Don't think yourself obliged to praise it, but give me your opinion of it with perfect freedom. As I don't pique myself on being a good poetess, I shall not be hurt by being told I am a bad one; but won't you think me a strange variable creature, who was making resolutions so lately never to indulge myself in scribbling verses, and now to have the assurance to send an ode to you, to whom I had professed those resolutions: 'Frailty, thy name is woman!' Perhaps the having made a resolution was that which gave me so strong an inclination to break it. Certain it is, that I invocated no Muse, nor racked my brains for a thought, but the thought came uncalled for, and the pen, unbidden, wrote it down. My conscience was eased of all scruples by the notable casuistry of my good friend, Mr.——, who assured me that to be better than my word was no breach of promise. I could not help allowing the truth of his doctrine, because it suited my inclination: so behold the fruits of it! but don't expose me, nor give away a copy.

"You expect, no doubt, that I should chide you, my dear Miss Carter, for don't you deserve it, for your flagrant partiality in giving the preference to one side of a controversy, of which you have seen neither side? O fie, fie, what odd reasons indeed must those be that could induce you

to give so unfair a judgment. But I know whom to blame for it, and I have threatened to beat him, but in vain; he is still partial, and would make you so; but don't be too much biassed by the account he has given you of Mr. R's. letters, which I perceive, by what you say, has been not altogether a just one. You say such an unmerciful prolixity upon a plain single subject, where one is not engaged by the interesting events of a narrative, and where there is no room for imagery or beauty of style, is beyond mortal sufferance; but give me leave to assure you that, in my humble opinion, there is great beauty of style in many parts of Mr. R's. letters, and that he illustrates his arguments by a number of stories, which, (though I must own I thought them not much to the purpose) gave me great pleasure, from his agreeable manner of telling them: in short, I do not believe that even you would think the time thrown away which would be spent in reading his part of the correspondence; and, if I had you in town, I would punish you for the unjust prepossession you have entertained, by making you read it all through; then indeed I would allow you to give your opinion, and I am sure it would be a more favourable one to poor dear Mr. Richardson, who never, I believe, wrote any thing that did not shew an excellent heart and a very uncommon understanding.

"I wish I could tell you that I had any hopes of seeing you soon in Kent, but I believe I shall not be there this year, as I expect to see my aunt very soon in town. Your brother made me melancholy, by telling me that you had made something like a resolution against poor London; but then I recollected that, though a very extraordinary one, you were nevertheless a woman, and took comfort. If you defer my hopes of seeing you ever so long, I will look forward with pleasure to the prospect, however distant: the eyes of my mind are not quite so purblind as those of my body, and make nothing of looking over ten or twenty years, to find what they wish to see. Yet does not my fondness for hope prevent my enjoying present blessings. I believe there are few people who are better pleased and contented with their lot than I, for I am qualified to feel my present happiness by having early experienced very different sensations."

LETTER V.

May 18.

"And so, madam, you will laugh at me and at my poor dear Mr. R.—why then I do protest I won't bear it! Was there ever so unmerciful, so unjust, so partial a censurer! Nay, don't wonder, for I sat down with a resolution to scold, and I will scold. 'History of Frogs,' 'Conquest of Mexico,'

'Art of flying to the Moon!' 'Thou hast the most unsavoury similes, and art indeed the most comparative rascally, sweet young prince!' but really and truly, dear Miss Carter, I am half angry in earnest at your condemning Mr. R's. letters in this manner, without ever having read them, and have a great mind to send them to you in mere spite; for after having set yourself so unreasonably against them, I doubt not but it will be a punishment to you, and yet good breeding will oblige you to read them if I send them. Therefore pray be a little more civil, for you see I have a way to make you repent your unmerciful raillery. You say you honour Mr. R. but you cannot honour his prolixity; now, seriously speaking, and partiality laid aside, as much as I can lay it aside, I do honour what you call his prolixity, and am highly pleased that he has lately given us a volume of additional letters to Clarissa. Things that are bad in their kind tire me, be they but sixpenny pamphlets; but am not I more obliged to an author who gives me three weeks entertainment, than to him who entertains me but three days? Besides, the minute circumstances and delicate strokes and observations, which are the things that swell his works, are, in my opinion, the principal beauties of them, and what distinguish them from all other works of the kind I ever saw. For my own part, I should not have

quarrelled with him for prolixity, had there been fourteen volumes of Clarissa, provided they had been equally beautiful with those we have seen. As to his letters, I do not allow you to judge of them without having read them. That they are very long I confess, nay, I will even grant that the argument would have been clearer had they been much shorter; but there is good sense in every page, wit and humour in some, entertaining narratives in others, which narratives were not concerning the history of frogs, the conquest of Mexico, nor the art of flying to the moon; though I have honestly owned (and thereby given you occasion to laugh, graceless as you are) that I did not think them much to the purpose of the debate between us. They are designed to prove, from the imprudencies of some individuals, how unfit young women in general are to be made independent, and how unhappy those marriages often are which are made without the advice or consent of their natural guardians and protectors. But as I never contended for any such undue liberty, as I never disputed the parents' right to a negative in the case of marriage, I do not think that any advantage could be made of these stories against me. You see that, partial as you think me, I acknowledge my real opinion without attempting to conceal or palliate what I think faulty. But if you laugh at my Mr. R. I declare I will be

angry with you, for he deserves that even his failings should be respected. And I am very angry still (though I have vented some of my passion) with Mr. D. for influencing you to condemn what you have never seen. So much for scolding; and now, finding my heart eased, and my good humour returning, I will proceed, in a quiet tone, to answer the rest of dear Miss Carter's letter.

"I am very sorry that the cause which deprived me of the pleasure of hearing from you sooner was so painful to yourself: it is great pity that mind and body are hardly ever able to keep even pace with each other. Your mind should have been joined to an Herculean body, which could have supported its share of the fatigues of so active a companion; and yet I am glad, for the honour of my sex, that it was thrown into a softer form; however, you must have some consideration for your mortal part, and beware of bringing on your sad head-aches, by too much or too intense study. A letter to me will cost your head no trouble, therefore I hope, untoward as you say it is, it will not refuse its consent to my being often favoured.

"Your too favourable reception of my small attempts in verse may possibly prove fatal to your repose, for should the scribbling fit ever seize me again, my maternal fondness will, in all likelihood,

tempt me to send the brat to you, who seem to have so much tenderness for such poor little half-starved infants."

LETTER VI.

Peterborough, July 31.

"AND so my dear Miss Carter you would have me give you an account of the new work in which Mr. Richardson is engaged; this poor, puzzling, story-telling Mr. Richardson! but, notwithstanding your naughty raillery, I will not punish you so severely as to forestall, and thereby lessen, the pleasure you will receive when this new work is finished, though perhaps you may think it tedious. For my own part, I cannot give it a higher commendation than to say I think it will be (if possible) superior to Clarissa; yet I must own to you that I don't believe it will be short.

"Indeed I am a little surprised that you, who are impatient with Mr. R.'s prolixity, should ever descend to the most tedious, as well as unedifying kind of reading in the world, I mean a romance. I make no scruple to call romances the worst of all the species of writing: unnatural representations of the passions, false sentiments, false precepts, false wit, false honour, and false modesty, with a strange heap of improbable, unnatural incidents mixed up with true history, and fastened

upon some of the great names of antiquity, make up the composition of a romance; at least of such as I have read, which have been mostly French ones. Then the prolixity and poverty of the style is insupportable. I have (and yet I am still alive) drudged through Le Grand Cyrus, in twelve huge volumes, Cleopatra, in eight or ten, Polexander, Ibrahim, Clelie, and some others, whose names, as well as all the rest of them, I have forgotten; but this was in the days when I did not chuse my own books, for there was no part of my life in which I loved romances. Perhaps those of Cervantes may be out of the common way; I should hardly think it possible for him to write a book which had not in it something admirable; and yet I think there are one or two very paltry novels in his Don Quixote. I wish I was able to read the other Spanish author, whom you mention with so much applause. Will you, in pity to us Ignoramuses, give us, in English, a few of those passages in which he speaks so honourably of our sex? Do, dear Miss Carter. We have not many patrons amongst the men; let us hear all that has been said by any of the ungenerous sex in our favour, since we are pretty sure to hear of their abuses.

"I am very glad to hear that your health is so much improved. I am not sorry that you read less than you used to do, but indeed I shall be so,

if I find that you write less. I fancy poetry is very wholesome; it introduces a set of pleasing images, which enliven the spirits, and put the blood in motion. I advise you, therefore, physically, to delight your friends with now and then an ode, which need not interrupt your walks, for I have a notion that nothing is more proper to inspire poetry, than a country walk in a fine evening."

LETTER VII.

Peterborough, Sept. 9.

"You give me great concern, dear Miss Carter, when you tell me, that few years of your life have been marked with so many unpleasing circumstances as the past. I sincerely lament that a mind so well furnished for happiness as yours, should be disturbed in its self-enjoyment by the turbulence and folly of others. There are so few people who know how to be happy, even when every outward circumstance concurs to make them so, that one is the less concerned when such change their imaginary evils into real ones; but the unavoidable sufferings of the good and wise ought to be every one's concern, and interest every heart in their behalf. It is indeed, as you say, vain and unreasonable to be disappointed at finding the world what it is, and what it must

ever be on this side of the day of doom; and yet I find it impossible not to be chagrined at every fresh instance of the deceitfulness and worthlessness of the generality of human kind. There is nothing so painful as distrust, to a frank and honest mind; and yet one is perpetually feeling the necessity of it, or suffering for the want of it. One seldom fails to see it grow upon people with their years, and observe that the longer the world is known, the less it is liked, and the less it is trusted. I am staggered and frighted at the difficulty of hitting the true medium, betwixt a credulity and confidence, which exposes one to perpetual disappointments and inconveniences, and a caution and distrust, which would murder friendship, wound benevolence, and destroy all the pleasures of society. Yet I had much rather suffer by the first, (as indeed I have more than once done) than fall into the other most uncomfortable extreme. Assist me, dear Miss Carter, to avoid both, and, above all, let us both avoid a fruitless discontent at the present state of things, and the necessary condition of humanity; for this our sober reason will tell us, (whenever we are calm enough to hear it) is equally painful and criminal. I think I have insensibly fallen into a kind of preachment, but indeed I could not know that you have been unhappy, without being grave, and I know you will not be disgusted with me for

being so. I hope you will tell me, in your next, that every thing which can give you uneasiness is removed, and that your mind and body are both at ease, and then I know your right disposition, and true (that is christian) philosophy, will improve that ease into happiness.

"I am sorry you could not favour me with a sample of Father Feyjoo's excellence. I am a little surprised that a Spaniard should think so favourably of women. One would imagine, by their manner of treating them, that they had as mean an opinion of them as the Turks: to be consistent, every tyrant should deny that his slaves have souls immortal like his own.

"I am reading Dr. Young's Night Thoughts; I must own, with great labour both of mind and tongue. Every word you say against my Mr. Richardson I will revenge myself for upon your Doctor Young. Yet I admire his thoughts, and revere him as a philosopher and a man; only I cannot help lamenting that he should have blundered so egregiously as to fancy himself a poet. Sure never was sense so entangled in briars as his! Instead of the flowers of language, his thoughts are wrapt up in thorns and thistles. I am sure it has cost me much toil and pain to untwist them; and, to say the truth, I like them as I do gooseberries, well enough when they are picked for me, but not well enough to gather

them. Yet, upon the strength of your recommendation, I think I am resolved to go through with them, though my tongue is already sore; for you must know I always read aloud here. If ever you read one of his nights aloud, pity my tongue! But, in good earnest, don't you think he should have left off with the fourth night? which I own is very fine. Don't you think the fifth and sixth sink terribly after it? I am afraid you will despise me for speaking thus of your favourite author, and, to appease you, I will own that I think he has many extreme fine thoughts, and some few fine lines; but his numbers are in general so much the reverse of tuneful, and his language so affectedly obscure, nay, in some places, so absolutely unintelligible to me, that I think upon the whole of what I have read (that is of the first six Nights) I cannot admire the work; but have been oftener disgusted and tired with it than pleased.

"I am sorry you were not at the Canterbury races this year. I am sure I have great reason to remember with pleasure those of last year, where I began an acquaintance from which I hope to receive pleasure and improvement to the end of my life."

LETTER VIII.

London, Nov. 12.

"I AM but lately and imperfectly recovered from an illness which obliged me to have recourse to a physician. A low fever, which confined me to my chamber about a week at Peterboro', settled upon my stomach after my return to town; but the most painful, though not the most dangerous part of my disorder, was the extreme lowness and weakness of my spirits. In the depth of this vapourish state, I scribbled the Ode to Health, which I enclose to you. I hope you never saw Mr. J. D.'s on the same subject: I never did till after I had written this, and am now quite out of conceit with my own. This communication being perfectly voluntary, I would fain make a merit of it with you, in order to induce you to follow the example; but I fear you will not allow that any thing can be meritorious which is done from so selfish a motive. The other trifle Mr. D. told me you asked for.

"I AM greatly pleased and edified by what you say of the disappointments we meet with from our fellow-creatures. It is, indeed, very probable that the greatest part of them proceed rather from the unjustifiable height of our own expectations, than from the artfulness and deceit of others. I am far from thinking it true, that 'a good person must

necessarily be a novice;' and allow the whole force of your observation, 'that the delicacy of virtue is more apt to be alarmed by the smallest indications of a wrong disposition, than the cunning of the wicked.' Yet I must own, to my shame, that I by no means deserve the compliment you are pleased to pay to my sagacity, of which two or three late instances have so forcibly convinced me, that all my vanity cannot keep me from being more mortified than pleased with your partial encomium. Too warm a heart, and too weak a judgment, will, I fear, often betray me into mistakes of this nature; nor are those I have already made sufficient to preserve me from being too rashly captivated with the appearance of goodness, and, perhaps, as rashly disgusted with the first signs and marks of a disposition I dislike. It is, however, a comfort to me that I can recollect some instances in which the event has justified my hasty way of judging. You yourself are one of them, my dear Miss Carter, of whom, at first sight, I conceived an opinion which I am sure will be more and more confirmed the longer I live; and for which I will not own myself indebted to fame, except in the articles of your understanding and knowledge.

"In justice to myself, that you may not think me absolutely tasteless, I think I should tell you that I have latély read doctor Young's Universal Passion, and am ready to retract all I said against

him as a poet, and confine my saucy censures entirely to that single performance of his which I cannot reconcile myself to, the Night Thoughts. I think the four first satires equal to any of Pope's. Those upon women are, in my opinion, much inferior to the others, which I hope may be accounted for to the credit of the sex.

"I was grieved to take notice of that servile flattery, which you so justly condemn in doctor Young, and which is so unworthy of his character. It could never have appeared in a more shocking light than as it is introduced in a work in which the author seems to be got above the world, and almost above humanity."

LETTER IX.

February 11.

"You inquire about Mr. Richardson and his new work, and I won't take it as a compliment to me that you do so. I expect you to be sincerely pleased when I tell you that this charming work goes on very fast, and will, I hope, make its appearance ere long. Mr. R. indeed sometimes talks as if it should not be published during his life; but I am very sure he will change his mind as to that particular. He can't be insensible to fame: I believe nobody that could deserve it ever was. The only objection I have to his book is,

that I apprehend it will occasion the kingdom's being overrun with old maids. It will give the women an idea of perfection in a man which they never had before, and which none of the pretty fellows they are so often fond of could ever have furnished them with; and the difference will be so striking between this idea and the generality of men, that it must surely make them nice in their choice, the consequence of which niceness will be a single life to ninety-nine out of a hundred. I am at present in a painful uncertainty as to the catastrophe, and will not involve you in the same uneasiness by letting you into any part of the story. I do still think that it is, if possible, superior to Clarissa. As I can say nothing higher in its praise, I will not say any thing more about it.

"Mr. —— tells me you are a friend to Fielding's Amelia. I love the woman, but for the book—it must have merit, since Miss Carter and some few more good judges approve of it. Are not you angry with the author, for giving his favourite character such a lord and master? and is it quite natural that she should be so perfectly happy and pleased with such a wretch? A fellow without principles, or understanding, with no other merit in the world but a natural good temper, and whose violent love for his wife could not keep him from injuring her in the most essential points, and that in circumstances that render him utterly in-

excusable. Can you forgive his amour with that dreadful, shocking monster, Miss Mathews? Are we to look upon these crimes as the failings of human nature, as Fielding seems to do, who takes his notions of human nature from the most depraved and corrupted part of it, and seems to think no characters natural, but such as are a disgrace to the human species? Don't you think Booth's sudden conversion a mere botch to save the author's credit as a moral writer? And is there not a tendency in all his works, to soften the deformity of vice, by placing characters in an amiable light, that are destitute of every virtue except good nature? Was not you tired with the two first volumes? What think you of Mrs. Bennet and her story? Pray let me have your sentiments at large on this book, for I am uneasy to know how it comes to pass that you like it, and I do not. The last volume pleased me very well; doctor Harrison's character is admirable; the scene between Colonel James and his lady, excellent; that in which Colonel James's challenge comes to the hands of Amelia is extremely affecting; the conversation between the Lord and Doctor Harrison, the doctor's letter, and the comments of the bucks upon it, I also admire very much. And now, I think, I have mentioned all that I can praise in the whole book; but it would take up more paper than I have left to point out one half of the pages that disgusted me.

"I have begun to read Guthrie's translation of Cicero's Epistles to Atticus, and have not been able to forbear laughing, more than once, at the excessive vanity of your favourite Tully. You see I am in a way to deserve your correction, and pray let me have it. I feel that I have not so much reverence for great names as most people have, and as, I suppose, I ought to have. Don't spare me for this fault; however, I am not so audacious as to deliver these heterodox opinions to every body, though I do to you; this may seem strange, as I am sure there is nobody whose judgment I revere more than yours, but I purposely lay myself open to your reproofs, because I know I shall benefit by them."

LETTER X.

May 27.

"It is with too much justice that dear Miss Carter calls me a mere Vaurien; I acknowledge myself such, nay worse; for when people are deeply in debt, they are said to be worse than nothing. You are so kind a creditor, that I fear there is want of generosity in taking advantage of your indulgence. I am angry with myself, I hope more angry than you are, and shall hardly be friends with myself till I am assured of your pardon

"I am extremely obliged to you for gratifying my curiosity with your reasons for speaking so favourably of Amelia, though, at the same time, I am not a little mortified to find that I cannot assent to all you say. I am afraid I have less mercy in my disposition than you, for I cannot think with so much lenity of the character of Booth, which, though plainly designed as an amiable one by the author, is in my opinion contemptible and wicked. 'Rather frail than wicked!' Dear Miss Carter! that is what I complain of, that Fielding contrives to gloss over gross and monstrous faults in such a manner that even his virtuous readers shall call them frailties. How bad may be the consequence of such representations to those who are interested in the deception, and glad to find that their favourite vices are kept in countenance by a character which is designed to engage the esteem and good wishes of the reader. Had I not reason to accuse the author of 'softening or hiding the deformity of vice,' when infidelity, adultery, gaming, and extravagance, (the three last accompanied with all the aggravation that the excellence of a wife and the distress of a young family could give them) are so gently reproved, even by Miss Carter? 'His amour with Miss Mathews,' you say, 'however blameable,' was attended with some alleviating circumstances:' what these were I am unable to discover. I think none but an abandoned

heart, incapable of the least delicacy, and lost to the love of virtue and abhorrence of vice, could have entertained any thoughts but of horror and detestation for that fiend of a woman, after hearing her story. Consider too the circumstances they were both in, Miss Mathews uncertain whether her life was not to atone for her crime; Booth in the deepest distress, his Amelia and her children left helpless and miserable; a gaol the scene of their amour! What a mind must that be, which, in such circumstances, could find itself under any temptation from the person of a woman whose crimes were so shocking, whose disposition so hateful, and whose shameless advances were so disgusting! how mean was his submitting to owe obligations to her! Indeed I do think him a very wretched fellow, and I should not have cared sixpence had the book ended with his being hanged. In poetical justice I almost think he should have been so. Poor Amelia would have been rid of a good-for-nothing husband, whose folly and wickedness gave her continual distress. Doctor Harrison would have taken her and her children home with him, where I will suppose she spent her life in great tranquillity, after having recovered her fortune. Have not I made a fine catastrophe? Now are you quite angry with me? I think I hear you call me 'cruel, bloody-minded wretch!' Well then, in complaisance to your tenderness, I will

suffer him to live, but indeed I cannot suffer him to be a favoured character; I can't help despising him, and wondering that Amelia did not do so too. I agree with you entirely in what you say of the mixture of virtues and faults, which make up the generality of characters, and I am also apt to believe that the virtues have most commonly the predominant share; but if this is the case in real life, Mr. Fielding's representation of it is not just; for in most of his characters the vices preponderate. Doctor Harrison, Amelia, and the honest serjeant are indeed exceptions; Booth himself I cannot allow to be one, for I do not find that he had any virtues equivalent to his faults. Good nature, when it is merely constitutional, and has no principle to support it, can hardly be reckoned a virtue, and you see that in him it was not strong enough to keep him from injuring and distressing those he loved best, when temptation came in his way. His regard to his wife's honour may be attributed to his love; at best it is but a negative goodness, and only proves him not a monster. I cannot help believing that Fielding has a very low opinion of human nature, and that his writings tend to enforce it on his readers; and I own I am always offended with writers of that cast. What end can it serve to persuade men they are Yahoos, but to make them act agreeably to that character, and despair of attaining a better! Is it not the

common plea of wicked men that they follow nature? whereas they have taken pains to debauch and corrupt their nature, and have by degrees reconciled it to crimes that simple, uncorrupted nature would start at."

LETTER XI.

Canterbury, Monday.

"It might perhaps be more modest in me, dear Miss Carter, to decline your very obliging and most agreeable invitation, but truly I am a very weak creature, and unable to resist so strong a temptation. My aunt has been good-natured enough to give me her excuse and permission to leave her for a few days; and next Friday, if convenient to you, I propose stuffing myself into that same lumbering conveyance you speak of, and embracing my dear Miss Carter between five and six in the evening. How shall I regale upon your one dish, with 'The feast of reason and the flow of soul!' Remember that you have promised me *one* dish; if I see it even *garnished* I shall take it as a rebuke for my want of modesty in taking you at your first word, and without any more ceremony making myself a part of your family. I believe indeed it is not quite right, but I can't help it, and you will see in this, as well as in an hundred other instances, when we

are much together, how great an enemy I am to forms, and how dangerous it is to tempt me to any thing I have an inclination for. I have thought of nothing but being with you since I read your letter. What a sweet opportunity shall we have of knowing more of each other's minds, in three days, than we should have done in three years in the common way of visiting! You see I take it for granted that our satisfaction is to be mutual; I believe every civil thing you say to me, and every expression of friendship from you to be perfectly sincere, without the least allowance for politeness, because I wish to believe, and because I think my dear Miss Carter is above a compliance with the fashions of the world that must cost her the smallest deviation from truth."

LETTER XII.

Canterbury, Wednesday.

"A THOUSAND thanks to my dear Miss Carter for the happiness I enjoyed in a visit which will ever give me pleasure in reflection, though at present that pleasure is mixed with a painful regret. A thousand thanks to her for allowing me to hope a share in one of the best of human hearts, in a friendship which would do honour to the first of women, even to her Miss F——; a friendship which I can never deserve, except by

the high value at which I prize it, and the sincere love and veneration with which I return it.

"I owe many thanks also to your very agreeable sister, who seems to me to have not only 'refined sense,' but 'all sense,' and an excellent genius for human conveniences. Though she is a wicked wit, and laughs at me, and despises me in her heart, yet I can't for my life be angry with her for it, but patiently consider that 'it might have pleased God to have made me a wit.' I saw her too exult over me in her housewifely capacity;—when I folded up the gingerbread nuts so awkwardly, I saw it was nuts to her; but I forgive her, and hope she will repent before she dies of all her uncharitable insults on a poor gentlewoman, that never was guilty of more than four poor odes, and yet is as careless, as awkward, and as untidy as if she had made as many heroic poems as the great and majestic Blackmore!

"You were pleased to be anxious about my journey, therefore I must give you some account of it. My company was much better than I hoped, and not a man midwife amongst them*. Imprimis, there was Mrs. ——, sister to Mr. ——, a very sensible, well-bred old gentlewoman, who knew my aunt, and with whom I scraped acquaintance. Item, a Mrs. ——, I think was her name, who I fancy was one of your party at commerce,

* Alluding, it is supposed, to some joke of Miss Carter's.

seeing she was fat and vociferous, and looked uncommonly joyous. With her a civil gentleman-like sort of a sail-maker (for that he told me was his trade) from Ratcliffe-Cross, very fat and large, with a leg bigger than my waist. Item, a maid servant, going to Lady ——'s, of a middle size. Item, a very fat gentlewoman, taken up very hot at Sandwich, and set down again at Wingham; who, in that three miles, with the assistance of the sail-maker, had very near finished my journey through this mortal life; but her removal restored me to the faculty of breathing, and I got to Canterbury without any casualty, save breaking my lavender-water bottle in my pocket, and cutting my fingers. N. B. I had like to have been overturned upon Sandown, but thought of the stoic philosophy, and did not squeak. At Wingham we refreshed nature, and repaired our clay tenements with some filthy dried tongue, and bread and butter, and some well-mixed mountain wine, by which means, as I told you before, I was brought alive to Canterbury."

LETTER XIII.

London, October 26.

"I OWN I am a little disappointed and grieved to find you against me on the question between us, and still more so to be obliged to confess that I

have hardly any body of sense and experience on my side. I dare not stand up alone in defence of mankind, especially when my antagonists are armed with facts, which I know not how to parry or resist. You are, however, a merciful and generous foe, and I am willing (finding my forces so weak) to come to a composition with you. I will grant you that there is very little virtue, and a great deal of iniquity and corruption to be found amongst those who are engaged in public life; provided you will allow me that those are not the people in whom we ought to look for virtue, and that human nature is not to be judged of by the most corrupted part of it. A man that is thoroughly engaged in the pursuit of interest, and whose principal end is the attainment of riches or power, whatever good inclinations he might set out with, will in all likelihood so often sacrifice them to his darling scheme, or at best find so little leisure to nourish and improve them, that in time they will languish and die, and cease to be a part of his nature. Bad habits and artificial evil by degrees possess the place of natural passions, and thus the man becomes totally depraved, who perhaps set out with an amiable benevolent mind in pursuit of what he supposed the means of happiness, that universal object of desire. Should we then see him in this state of depravity, sacrificing to some petty interest of his own the interest of

his country, adding to stores which he knows no rational use for, the spoils of the poor; persecuting with inveterate hatred the virtue that dares to reprove or oppose him, unattracted by the charms of innocence, and unmoved by the tears of distress; should we, from his example, pronounce man to be a malign, selfish being, by nature corrupt, wicked, malevolent? You, my dear, have already allowed that 'mankind, as formed by the hand of heaven, are amiable and good,' and that 'even the worst have some unconquerable good qualities, which entitle them to some degree of tenderness and esteem.' I know not whether any good qualities are unconquerable, their effects at least are matters of choice, and should not therefore, even in the worst of men, be stript of all their merit. All our good is certainly derived from the eternal fountain of good, but since heaven gave it, it may be termed our own. We are placed in a state of warfare, surrounded with temptations and treacherous enemies; those who stand their ground deserve our esteem, affection, and applause; and those who fall seem rather to demand our pity than our hatred. Benevolence seems due to all; and I cannot help being angry with all representations of human nature which tend to weaken this divine affection, which must constitute the happiness as well as duty of a social being. You, my dear Miss Carter, can never be

a misanthrope, the most detestable of characters, the only one indeed which seems to justify our hatred. Human nature is still capable of exalted virtue, and great is the number of those, who, though they reach not the summit of perfection, are nevertheless, in the main, good and amiable, 'innocent from the great offence,' and desirous to perform their duty. Whilst such are easy to be found, I will not hate the world, nor endeavour to suppress the tenderness of my heart for every creature that wears the human form. Private life is without doubt the most innocent, and I will never seek friendships out of it; therefore I hope I shall not be a great sufferer from the corruptions of the grande monde, nor lose my benevolence in the resentment of injuries. I think I read the Rambler with great attention, yet I cannot entirely acquit him of the charge of severity in his satires on mankind. I believe him a worthy, humane man, but I think I see a little of the asperity of disappointment in his writings. You are infinitely more moderate and merciful. I believe I almost agree to all you have said on the subject, but my heart is averse to a conviction which must bring with it sorrow and humiliation."

LETTER XIV.

October 11, 1752.

"I AM extremely obliged to you for the sermon: it is a most excellent one, and affected me much. I am shocked and amazed at the proceedings mentioned in it, and at the insolence of Mr. ——'s ungentlemanlike letter. Well might your excellent papa exclaim—'Hear O Heavens, and give ear O earth.' But worth like his, will surely in time get the better of malice, except mankind be indeed as much depraved as the Rambler represents them in his history of Abonaid, the son of Morad. I own I am very unwilling to believe those that fright us with such shocking pictures of human nature, and could almost quarrel with my very great favourite, the Rambler, for his too general censures on mankind, and for speaking of envy and malice as universal passions. There is, without doubt, abundance of folly and levity in the world, but I hope less malignity than the censors of it seem to suppose. Many people do mischief without designing it, and neglect to do good for want of thinking of it.

"Benevolence is often stifled and subdued by other passions, but surely it can seldom be totally extinguished or supplanted by the blackest of passions, malice. What think you my dear? am I

to believe that I am surrounded with beings, who, if I am good and amiable, will hate and persecute me from envy, if frail and faulty, will rejoice in an opportunity to triumph over my weakness and to display their own superiority? who love not, but from self-interest, yet have too much pride to be capable of gratitude, and are irritated to malevolence by the burden of benefits? Such is the human character, if we believe Mr. Johnson, and many others; who, having suffered from the world, exaggerate its faults with the bitterness of enemies, and impute to the worst causes the effects by which themselves have been hurt. It is the common complaint of those who have lived long, and profess to know the world, that young people will take no warning from their experience, nor believe the wickedness of mankind, till they feel the effects of it. I should be sorry to be justly accused of such obstinate rashness; but yet there is something so very uncomfortable in distrust, and in being obliged to disesteem those very creatures whom humanity teaches us to love, that we may surely be excused, if we are unwilling to think so hardly of a world we have not tried, and if we allow something for the rage of disappointment in its accusers. For my own part, in the small circle of my acquaintance, I find so much real merit, such exalted worth in some, and such right intentions and

harmless inclinations in many, that, except I am to think myself favoured beyond all other mortals in the set of companions I am thrown into, the world has certainly been wronged by the representation of moralists and satirists; and those who choose their friends and acquaintance for their worth, may find proper objects for their best affections. But I believe many complain that virtue is no where to be found amongst men, who never took the trouble to seek her, or who are not qualified for any connection with her; who choose their friends amongst the lightest and most profligate of mortals, and then complain of the fickleness, treachery, and ingratitude of the human heart. I have another quarrel with the Rambler, which is for the contemptuous manner in which he generally speaks of women, for neglecting to address his precepts and cautions to them, and for drawing so many bad and ridiculous female characters, and hardly one good one. I believe he would have found us more docile disciples than the men, less prepossessed by vicious habits and passions, and more easily attracted by the claims of virtue and truth. I dare say you will agree with me in this, for you carry your partiality to your own sex farther than I do. Indeed you have the strongest reason to think highly of it, and have the best right of any woman in the world to expect others to do so too.

LETTER XV.

London, November 29, 1752.

"And so, my dear, in ten years time I am to subscribe to the maxim of Bias, that 'the majority are wicked!' I know not indeed how far I may be influenced by my own experience of the wickedness of a few to condemn the many, but at present I do not feel as if I could ever consent to so severe a sentence. And still less can I agree with the Rambler that malignity and envy are universal passions. On the contrary, I am persuaded that benevolence and social love (however stifled and depressed, or even sometimes totally extinguished by other passions) are originally implanted in the human breast as universally as the principle of self-love, which some maintain to be the only innate affection, and the only motive of our actions. I believe I was wrong in loading the poor *little* great-ones of the world with too large a share of the wickedness of it. I agree with you that those who, with smaller opportunities, are mischievous to the worst of their power, are equally guilty with a conqueror or a first minister. But I hope the spirit of mischief is not so general as you seem to suppose. If you have been a witness of some astonishing instances of fraud, ingratitude, and malice, you may counterbalance them by the exalted virtues of some with-

in the circle of your family and friends, who do honour to the human species. Set the very good against the very bad, and allow me to persist in thinking that the majority are between both. Either too insignificant to be styled virtuous, or wicked; or else such a strange mixture of good and bad qualities, that it is difficult to say which scale is uppermost—are the two characters which I fancy would be found the most general, and under which three parts in four of mankind should be classed. Your next paragraph delights me, for I am always pleased with myself when I find my thoughts agree with yours. I was always offended at the assertion that the world grows worse and worse, and that the present age is more corrupt than all that have gone before it. I cannot help supposing that as the world is more enlightened, as well by the discoveries of human reason, as by the progress of divine revelation, it is more virtuous as well as more wise than in former ages; and this opinion is further justified by the flagrant and outrageous crimes recorded in history, far greater than any we hear of in the present generation.

"I am but now reading Voltaire's Louis XIV. which every body else has read long ago. How amazing it is to me that mankind should agree to dignify with the epithets of great and glorious, so black a character! Yet how if this man him-

in order to the regulation of his moral conduct. And this is certainly true of mankind in general, allowing that some few men, of great abilities, and much leisure from the common occupations of life, have, by slow deductions and laborious reasoning, discovered all the great duties of morality; and though great part of the world is now enlightened by the gospel, yet whole nations still remain in darkness, whom you cannot suppose accountable for all the immoralities which their ignorance, and the superstition they were bred up in, makes them commit, whilst their hearts are perhaps innocent of any evil intention. And though this was not the case of Louis, who must have had opportunities of knowing the truth, yet surely some extenuation of his crimes may be allowed, from the corruption of flattery, and the strength the passions gain by being continually fed and indulged. How plausible every argument appears which coincides with inclination, and how easily the understanding may be dazzled by plausibility, every one must at some period of their lives have experienced. Now, though no one can be perfectly innocent, who from indolence, or any other cause, neglects to employ the whole powers of his mind in the search of moral truth, and the detection of false arguments that tend to mislead his conduct, yet surely he who thus weakly or carelessly suffers him-

self to be misled, is less guilty than he who knowingly and wilfully seeks the hurt and destruction of his fellow creatures, and defies the commands of the living God. This mitigation of guilt was all I meant to plead for, with regard to poor Louis. But I think much more may be allowed for many of our fellow creatures, who, by the consequences of your argument, would stand condemned. That error may be innocent, both in faith and practice, is, in my opinion, as certain as that God is just and merciful, and will demand an account of no more than he has entrusted his servants with. That he has not made all his human creatures capable of equal perfection, is no more an imputation on his justice, than that he did not make them equal to the angels. The intention of the heart, which only the great Searcher of hearts can know, is surely that by which every individual shall be judged, and it is for this reason, I suppose, that we are repeatedly forbidden to judge and condemn one another.

"I heartily thank you for the scrap. It is an excellent introduction to the positive proofs of the truth of Christianity, which I hope you will proceed to give me."

LETTER XVII.

Hampton, July 10.

"Miss ———, who wrote to you from North-end, I suppose gave you some account of our delightful party there. How earnestly did we wish you with us. Mr. Richardson was all goodness to us, and his health being better than usual, enabled him to read and talk to us a great deal, with cheerfulness, which never appears more amiable than in him. We had a visit whilst there from your friend Mr. Johnson and poor Mrs. Williams. I was charmed with his behaviour to her, which was like that of a fond father to his daughter. She seemed much pleased with her visit; shewed very good sense, with a great deal of modesty and humility; and so much patience and cheerfulness under her misfortune, that it doubled my concern for her. Mr. Johnson was very communicative and entertaining, and did me the honour to address most of his discourse to me. I had the assurance to dispute with him on the subject of human malignity, and wondered to hear a man who by his actions shews so much benevolence, maintain that the human heart is naturally malevolent, and that all the benevolence we see in the few who are good, is acquired by reason and religion. You may believe I entirely disagreed with him, being, as you know, fully

persuaded that benevolence, or the love of our fellow-creatures, is as much a part of our nature as self-love, and that it cannot be suppressed or extinguished without great violence from the force of other passions. I told him I suspected him of these bad notions from some of his Ramblers, and had accused him to you; but that you persuaded me I had mistaken his sense. To which he answered, that if he had betrayed such sentiments in the Ramblers, it was not with design, for that he believed the doctrine of human malevolence, though a true one, is not an useful one, and ought not to be published to the world. Is there any truth that would not be useful, or that should not be known?"

LETTER XVIII.

September 12, 1753.

"I HOPE the severe sentence you pronounced upon the tender affections, 'that they never were attended with pleasures equal to half their pains,' proceeded only from the present sufferings they occasion you, and that you will soon retract it. I believe there is nothing more difficult than to make a just calculation of our pleasures and pains. The present weighs so heavy in our scale, that we can hardly do justice to the past; and pleasures more easily escape our memory than pains. Considering all this, I am willing to hope, that the

pains which attend on the social affections are no more than a reasonable price for the sweet pleasures that arise from them, without which life would be insipid and uncomfortable. I allow that all excesses are destructive to happiness, and that the best passions may become faulty by being too much fed and indulged. An excess of sensibility, I believe, generally produces unhappiness; but yet I cannot envy the stoical heart, which is surely in the other extreme. To practise beneficence without being capable of tenderness, is perhaps most meritorious, but it is not natural, and therefore not amiable. Nothing but affection can create affection; and I believe no human creature is so sufficient to himself, as to be tolerably happy without being beloved. Do not then, my dear Miss Carter, quarrel with your heart because you cannot make a stoic of it. Remember you are indebted to its tenderness for your best enjoyments, and that even all your excellences, without that amiable quality of your nature, could only procure you admirers, but no friends: you would be approved and esteemed, but not beloved.

"I cannot but observe that this philosophical apathy is no where recommended to us in the sacred writings. The laws of Christianity extend to the inward dispositions of the heart, as well as to the outward actions; and we are not only com-

manded to 'do to others as we would they should do unto us,' but 'to love them as ourselves.'"

LETTER XIX.

"I DO not find, from my own experience, that your philosophy is true concerning pleasures and pains, but perhaps this is owing to the weakness or particular turn of my mind. If you are capable of 'perpetuating the influence of agreeable circumstances,' and of 'constantly repulsing the ideas of past pains,' you must have attained such a command over your own imagination, as I did not suppose possible even to you. I cannot help thinking that pain operates more forcibly on the human mind than pleasure, and consequently leaves deeper impressions. But, on the other hand, I gratefully acknowledge that, if our pleasures are less strong, they are infinitely more numerous than our pains, and arrive in so constant and quick succession, that they leave fainter traces on the memory."

LETTER XX.

May 20.

"I AM charmed with the Bishop of London's discourses. I suppose you have read them, and want to know your opinion of them, and whether

you do not think them very proper to be recommended to our friend. There is such a noble freedom in his manner of thinking, and such strength and clearness in his arguments, that I think they must have weight with every unprejudiced reader. You hurt me to the heart by the doubtful manner in which you answered my question concerning my poor friend. O, Miss Carter! how unsatisfactory is every connexion we can form in this life, unless we can look forward to the delightful hope of perpetuating it beyond the grave, and of sharing together a happiness without end or interruption! But I think there was always a difference in our opinions concerning the innocence of error My own has been much staggered by the reverence I have for yours on all subjects of this kind; and I have now no firm and settled opinion about it. The merit of faith, if you confine the sense of the word to mere belief, always appeared to me a point of great difficulty. I wish you would give me your thoughts at large on the subject; particularly I would ask wherein the merit of belief consists? how far is it voluntary? and also, whether you do not think it possible for demonstrable truths to be proposed to a mind incapable of perceiving the demonstration, though willing to receive truth, and this, exclusive of the cases of lunacy and folly; incapacity must of course be innocent? And there are circumstances which I believe may ren-

der a person of sound understanding, incapable of sound reasoning on some one subject; and these circumstances may not be matter of choice, but necessity: as for example, the strong bias of education and early prejudices. Experience shews us how very difficult it is to get the better of these; and the question with me is, whether it is even possible to some minds to get the better of them. When I see the strange absurdities the human mind is capable of, and the infinite variety of opinions that prevail amongst men, I shudder at the thought of condemning any person for his opinion; and yet when I consider that opinion is that which governs all our actions, it should seem that opinion alone constitutes the man good or bad, and that on the due regulation of our opinions depends all our virtue, or our guilt. In short, I am lost and bewildered in the question, and want your guiding hand to lead me into truth."

LETTER XXI.

"I AM much inclined to adopt your notion of evil being only negative, if I could persuade myself that it would hold good on examination. But I do not find even your system free from difficulties, and I suppose the human understanding can never form one on this subject that can give it complete satisfaction. You say, 'evil, in a certain

degree, must necessarily be the lot of all created beings;' but here you surely confound natural with moral evil. Mere defect of wisdom, which must be the lot of all created and limited intelligences, does not, I suppose, necessarily imply moral evil; if it did, moral evil would be unavoidable, and therefore not punishable: and sin seems rather to be a wilful abuse of that portion of knowledge which is allotted us, than the mere absence of 'infallibility of wisdom.' Though all sin is folly, all folly is not sin: and I suppose that when it is said, 'he charges his angels with folly,' it is not meant that he charges them with sin; since, according to our ideas of those happy beings, they fulfil the ends of their existence, and the laws of their nature, and are perfect in their kind, though not perfect in an absolute sense. The puzzling question is, Whence does sin derive its original? Why should any being wilfully abuse its powers and degrade its nature knowing that misery and ruin must be the consequence? Why is it that even the best of us mortals must confess that though in general they love goodness, and desire to practise it, yet 'the good which they love they do not, and the evil which they would not, that they do.' What it is that can ever influence the judgment, or the will in contradiction to the judgment, to choose evil rather than good, death rather than life, misery rather than happiness, I never

could find out either in myself or other people. I cannot find out what were the motives that determined me to those actions which I have afterwards condemned, nor what it is that withholds me from constantly performing all those which I know to be right, and which I know it is in my power to perform. I shall almost make you think me running headlong into fatalism, and all manner of absurdities, but it is no such matter. I stop short in my career, and content myself with doubt and ignorance on these points; without suffering my doubts to overturn certain clear and demonstrable doctrines, which are the rocks in which I fix my anchor, and can see the waves fluctuate about me without any great discomposure. When I have thought, and wondered, and conjectured, till I am giddy, I change the subject of my cogitations, and am as easy as if I had found out the whole scheme of Providence, in the full assurance that those things of which I am so ignorant, are adjusted exactly as they should be, and that nothing is necessary for me to know, but that which God has revealed to me."

LETTER XXII.

September 27.

"How many thanks are due from me to you, my dear Miss Carter, for some of the happiest

hours of my life. 'Those hours I passed with thee.' Though they are past, they have left me so rich a store for recollection, that I shall enjoy them many times over, for months to come. I can no way repay the obligation I am under to you, for bestowing your time on me in preference to so many other friends, but by telling you what I know will give you pleasure, that your visit to Canterbury has been a great and real benefit to me. Your conversation seems to have new set the spring of my mind, which had been greatly hurt and weakened. Till you arrived I was just in the state which Miss T. so charmingly describes; 'je mourois d'ennui!' but you have restored to me a relish for my existence, and though you have made me acquainted with some of the highest pleasures this mortal state affords, you have awakened in me the capacity of enjoying the most common and trifling. Health and spirits returned with cheerfulness, and you my dear were the beloved minister of all these blessings to me. Since you went I have done nothing but sing Metastatio's song. I am distracted for a tune that will go to the translation, that I might sing that from morning till night. Why don't Mr. Ward set it? I have made Neddy walk with me to the tree by Sir Edward Hale's park, and intend often to reconnoitre the spot where you sat by

me there 'Io rivedro soventi L'amene Spiagge, O prie,' &c.

"Methinks these little romantic tendernesses, these fond 'memorials,' are as natural, and almost as pleasing, to friendship as to love. Are you I wonder superior to all these unphilosophical indulgences of fancy? or do the woman and the poetess still keep their ground against the philosopher? I believe the last is true, and I should be sorry to find it otherwise; if I had not observed a few dear comfortable signs of human weakness i. you, my love would never have got the better o. my reverence for you. What is the meaning I wonder that imperfections are so attractive? and that our hearts recoil against gigantic and unnatural excellence? It must be because perfection is unnatural, and because the sweetest charms and most endearing ties of society arise from mutual indulgence to each other's failings."

LETTER XXIII.

February 4, 1754.

"Mr. —— tells me, to my great concern, my dear Miss Carter, that your ancle has not yet recovered its strength, and that your active spirit is still curbed and cramped 'within a corner of the world,' instead of roaming, like Will o' th' Wisp, over hedge and ditch, hill and vale, through

ellinge woods and barren heaths. I am afraid body and mind quarrel more than ever in this confinement. For my part I am inclined to side with body, who I suspect meets with hard usage from its towering mate, who seems to treat it with neglect and disdain, as if it could hardly condescend to acknowledge it for its partner and companion. I would as soon be Jortin's wife as your body! and yet it has always been one of my prayers that I might never be the wife of an overgrown scholar.

"Methinks I am doubly audacious, in thus declaring war at once with your mind and your mind's favourite. Notwithstanding the compassion I feel for your body and Jortin's wife, I have a great respect for the husbands of both; and it is not without a degree of indignation that I hear our admired author's remarks spoken of with more contempt than approbation. I own his candid freedom, and the just abhorrence he shews to every degree of persecution, has given me a strong partiality for his work. His wit and humour appear to me (as they are inoffensive) very pleasing. Far unlike Warburton's, which shocks instead of diverting me. However, I find Jortin is censured for his lively sallies, as being often foreign and improper to his subject. The charge of pedantry lies heavy on him, and it will be difficult to clear him from it, if it be true that his numerous quota-

tions from the classics answer no other purpose but that of displaying the learning he got at school, except that of swelling his book; and *I* may add, that of vexing his unlearned readers. As to his heterodoxy, I do not find that any open attacks have been made upon him, but I believe the orthodox regard him as an unsound member, who, by joining with no party, makes himself the enemy of all."

LETTER XXIV.

April 23, 1754.

"I HAVE been reading Leland, and had begun by Miss ——'s desire to write remarks on it as I went along; but having seen hers, and your answer, I conceived it useless for me to go on, and have broken off in the middle, finished the book and sent it home. I am much pleased with the work, though I have often wished that the scheme of it had allowed a larger scope to the answers in defence of christianity, as his references would engage one in a dreadful long course of reading, such a one as I am sure I shall never attempt. In general I think Dr. L. writes with candour and moderation, though I cannot acquit him of deviating a little from it in some few passages. Perhaps I am particularly nice in this respect. All reasoners ought to be perfectly dispassionate, and ready

to allow all the force of the arguments they are to confute. But more especially those who argue in behalf of christianity, ought carefully to preserve the spirit of it in their manner of expressing themselves. I have so much honour for the christian clergy, that I had much rather hear them railed at, than hear them rail, and I must say that I am often grievously offended with the generality of them for their method of treating all who differ from them in opinion. I think the summary of the evidences for christianity in the conclusion, excellent.

I believe I must quarrel with you my dear for your very unjust accusation of me with respect to roses and myrtles. Because indeed I am no florist, and cannot rattle over the names of flowers in Heathen Greek, nor have ever undertaken a journey of fifty miles to visit a tulip or an auricula, I am to be told truly that I am as well pleased with nettles, as with myrtles, and that I don't know a rose from a piony! But I stoutly and resolutely deny the charge. Though I have no acquired taste for flowers, or butterflies, or china, or shells, I will say and maintain in my own behalf that nature has not denied me a nose. I have also eyes, whereby I can discern the different shapes and hues of nettles and myrtles, roses and pionies. Moreover I aver that I have often stopped my father's chair to gather May and wild woodbines

from the hedges; and I well remember that in the days of my youth, when my heart was very much fixed on living in a cottage in the midst of a wood, I particularly insisted on the said cottage being covered all over with honeysuckles, and having a rose-bush on the side of the porch. And though I must confess I do not find the happiness of my life so essentially concerned in these particular circumstances now, as it was then, I am not yet fallen into the unpoetical apathy of which you so uncharitably accuse me. It is true I loved you better than flowers, and therefore stripped myself, and my aunt's little garden, to deck you with the spoils.—Ungrateful! and you to reproach me!"

LETTER XXV.

August 13.

"I OUGHT not, I cannot, deny any request of my dear Miss Carter's which it is in my power to comply with without breach of faith to any other person, therefore I send you the verses you ask for, though I have not yet been perfectly explicit on the subject which occasioned them. I desire you will be honest and frank in giving me your opinion of them. If you will take the pains to correct them, you will be kinder to them than I have been, for I never took any pains at all about them, being fully persuaded that they would never

see the light. Whether the ode has any poetry in it or not I can't tell, but I believe there is nature in it, because the thoughts are genuine, and arose in my mind just in the order in which I have set them down, in plain prose and sober sadness. I know you will smile at my distress with a kind of pity not much unlike contempt, but I cannot help it, and comfort myself with thinking, that cased up as you are in philosophy, armour-proof against the 'frivolous bolt of Cupid,' you will at least forgive if not applaud me, if ever you become intimately acquainted with the Caro Ogetto del mio innocente ardore. Your opinion of the lordly sex I know is not a very high one, but yet I will one day or other make *you* confess that a man may be capable of all the delicacy, purity, and tenderness which distinguish our sex, joined with all the best qualities that dignify his own. I am very sorry to find by your 'faint discoveries of our twilight confidences,' that your Canterbury visit was made so uncomfortable to you. It is odd enough that one should find a pleasure in talking a language that cannot be understood, and yet it is certain that I have felt great *soulagement* in giving you hints which I thought you could make nothing out of, and that I have been mightily gratified and wonderfully proud of my consequence with you, when you have in very friendly sort communicated to me a parcel of words, whose sense remained an

absolute secret to me. How many of the pleasures and endearments of society, as well as the plagues and nuisances of it, arise from little silly circumstances which reason has no share in? This ought to make one patient with the follies which teaze and torment us, since we should be so loath to part with those that please us, and upon the whole I think we may, without any great stretch of benevolence or philosophy, determine, that since we have certain affections which must be disposed of to some creature or other, it is better to bestow them on human creatures, than on antelopes or periwinkles. I think *I* may, without vanity, demand a preference in your esteem, to the best periwinkle that was ever cast on your shore. The merit of messieurs the antelopes I am not so well acquainted with; they may perhaps be better qualified to be your walking mates than I am; but in some other qualities, such as hearing secrets which I never can divulge, and contenting myself with reasons which I don't understand, I am sure they cannot excel me. Therefore whilst you can have me to love, I beg you will not make alliances with these foreigners."

LETTER XXVI.

November 11, 1755.

"I KNOW you will imagine better than I can describe all the various sensations of my heart on

this occasion;* for though you live among the stoics, and study nothing but Epictetus, you have, to my comfort, as unphilosophical a heart as myself. What an ill-natured comfort you will say! Not so, my dear Miss Carter. The heart that is proof against pain, is inaccessible to pleasure; and as I cannot help believing that the bounteous hand of Providence has stored even this poor world with at least an equal portion of pleasure as of pain, I have always thought it worth while to take one's share of both. I will, however, read your Epictetus when it comes forth, and am very impatient for it, though I do not expect to be able to adopt his maxims, or practise his doctrines. I cannot doubt your success in any thing you undertake, therefore I am not under any apprehensions of having my ears wounded by the blasts of censure against your work, though I shall be at hand to receive the first breath of your fame. I hope and believe that you will gain all the honour that a translation can claim. But as that is much less than your genius is capable of acquiring in other ways, I heartily wish this may be the last you will ever be employed in. I do grudge you to such a task! You ought to be an original writer, and let your works be translated by those who can only help the world to words, but not to new ideas or new knowledge. Pray let me know

* An alarm about her father, who was at Bath.

when you go to the press. I know you will be in twitters, and I shall feel for you.

"But yet I rejoice that you are likely soon to rid your hands of this laborious work, which has so much engrossed your time, and confined your fancy. I know I speak peevishly about it, for it always vexed me."

LETTER XXVII.

March 27, 1756.

"MOST sincerely do I pity your present situation, and heartily join in your kind wish that I were with you; as I flatter myself you love me well enough to find some comfort and relief from my sympathizing friendship. I can easily believe that, to such a nature as yours, scarce any circumstance could be so irksome as that in which you find yourself, especially as it appears that your wisdom and benevolence have not the influence that might be expected on the people about you. 'Epictetus would tell you this ought to give you no concern.' I should have a great respect indeed for Epictetus, if he could furnish us with a receipt to prevent our suffering any pain from the faults and follies of those with whom we are necessarily connected; but if he cannot do this, there is something very provoking in being told that one ought not to feel. This unreasonable precept, thank

God, is but of human authority! The divine laws are calculated for a real, not an imaginary state of being. They forbid the indulgence of our natural passions and sensations, under circumstances in which they would become injurious to our fellow creatures or ourselves; but they do not forbid the sensations themselves.

"They teach us to endure with patience, and comfort us with the prospect of infinite rewards; but they do not pretend to make us armour proof against calamity, or callous to the feelings of humanity. How must the human understanding be distressed for want of the revelation of a future life, when it could only justify Providence, and maintain the cause of virtue, by contradicting the voice of nature, and denying the clearest evidence of the senses! When, in order to preserve to virtue its supposed advantages and rewards, man was obliged, in despite of every natural and social passion, to set up for an independent happiness, and defy his fellow mortals to hurt him!

"And what a savage thing must be the virtue of a philosopher! how different from that of a christian! Whilst the former, shut up within himself, fancying he has found happiness in the contemplation of his own excellence, looks with proud contempt on the miseries and crimes that surround him, and stops his ears and hardens his heart to the loud cries of nature, who tells him,

'These whom he despises are his brethren,' and that he himself is every moment liable to the like distress and the like depravity. The christian

'Soft and dissolving as a cloud,
Losing itself in doing good,'

finds himself deeply interested in every thing that concerns humanity. The fear of suffering hinders him not from making himself a party in the affairs of others, whenever he can hope to prevent or alleviate their misfortunes, assist and encourage their virtue, rectify their mistakes, sooth and mollify irritated passions, or even afford them the consolation of being pitied, and seeing him share in their affliction. Their crimes and infirmities, instead of exciting his hatred and contempt, alike attract his compassion, and serve to keep awake his attention to the insecurity of his own condition, the weakness of his own nature, and the imperfection of his own virtue. Humble and diffident of himself, tender and considerate to others, active to do good, passive and resigned to unavoidable evil, he enjoys the happiness allowed and designed for him in the exercise of the social and good affections, and, supported by piety and hope, bears up with cheerful fortitude under the allotted conditions of his innocent enjoyments, pain, sorrow, solicitude, and disappointment.

"How much better qualified for the life of man, a social and connected being, is the latter character than the former! and how great is our advantage, who are rescued from the inextricable maze of error, into which ignorance is plunged by pride, in following the dim light of unassisted reason! who are taught to know our true condition, our diseases and their remedies, our proper aims, our intended blessings, and our necessary sufferings! the end of our journey, and the right road through it.

"How great are our advantages! but how inexcusable the abuse or neglect of them! a fearful consideration this, my dear Miss Carter! which makes me almost tremble when I call myself a christian!

"How sweet, how amiable, and how happy (but how different from that of the stern, unfeeling philosopher!) is the disposition which we are commanded to cultivate by the blessed author of our holy religion! and how dearly (as you admirably observe) do we pay for every neglect of the wise and gracious precepts which for our own good he has enjoined on us."

LETTER XVIII.

"I AM grieved to hear that you have suffered so much with the head-ache, for though you have

learnt of your friend Epictetus to talk of the headache as if it were no evil, I, who hold all that stuff in mortal contempt, and who know you, with all your stoical airs, to be made of nothing better than flesh and blood like my own, am not at all comforted by any of your jargon, nor yet, by your desiring me not to concern myself about you. Till I have learnt the art of converting my heart into a flint, of your master Epictetus, who has not yet been able to teach it you, I must and will concern myself about you. And I expect you, like an honest christian, to concern yourself about me, and to be very glad to hear that I am wonderfully amended, and that my spirits have been pure well for this week past, notwithstanding a great cold, which has given me numberless pains, and prevented my enjoying the fine weather as much as I wished. I find myself almost as philosophical as you about all illnesses that do not affect my spirits, and am quite thankful and happy with a hundred aches, as long as *they* hold up and enable me to be *agreeable*.

LETTER XXIX.

Canterbury, August 29, 1757.

"SOMETIMES I seem, like Panthea's lover, to have two souls. The one convinced of the goodness of Providence 'alike in what it gives and

what denies,' cheerful and contented, and, considering the whole of its situation, exulting in an uncommon share of earthly happiness. The other lamenting its incapacity to enjoy what it has, or to attain what it wishes; endeavouring to account, by outward circumstances, for a depression which has its cause in some unknown part of the body or mind, and fancying that a change of circumstance would make it happy; feeling pain and disgust from objects of indifference, and indifference from objects of pleasure. I thank God my best soul has now the upper hand, by the assistance of medicine and cool weather, much more than of reason; and perhaps by the hope of two or three days of fancied good, in the presence of a *fancied essential** to my happiness, who has promised to come down and see me some time before the middle of next month. After having been so serious, it is hardly allowable to begin again throwing stones at your poor philosopher. Yet I cannot for my life forbear hurling one at him, which I picked up t'other day out of the dirt, that is, out of Swift. 'The stoical method of supplying our wants by lopping off our desires, is like cutting off our feet when we want shoes.' I was wonderfully diverted with the comparison, and immediately resolved, though I am almost barefoot here at Canterbury, not to submit to the

* Mr. Chapone.

operation, till I have tried what a certain *shoemaker at London* can do for me, who though his shoes used to pinch me at first, and gave corns, yet has now *got the length of my foot*, and fits me as well as one can reasonably expect. You see Epictetus has no great chance of getting the better of me, except he can, as the saying is, bring me down *in my wedding shoes*."

LETTER XXX.

June 20, 1758.

"I DID certainly think of you very often my dear Miss Carter, and inquire about you of every body that I thought likely to give me information; but found all your friends hereabouts were as much in the dark about you as myself. It is however a comfort, arising perhaps from no very generous motive, to find you capable of committing the same fault, and of accounting for it in the same manner I have so often done myself. And it is a still greater comfort to have heard at last, that you are safe and well in the midst of your happy circle of friends at Deal. I was a little angry with you in my heart, when I heard of you tearing away to Deal in that violent manner the same evening that you got to Canterbury. Surely you have too little mercy on 'that paltry body of yours,' which, paltry as it is, is a good useful

machine to the soul even of a philosopher, in its present state; and should therefore be handled with less cruelty and outrage; but I know it is in vain to plead with you in its behalf, who have been always so scandalously wanting in natural affection towards it; for my part, I cannot help loving and pitying it, for the sake of its kind offices, in bringing me acquainted with your soul; and I own it vexes me to the heart to see it so used."

LETTER XXXI.

Canterbury, August 4.

"I AM glad Mrs. H. is at Deal, for you will find some intervals to enjoy her company, and it will be of service to your spirits. My best wishes are with you, my dear friend! would I could be so myself, if I could be worth any thing to you in your present situation! I hope, however, every day makes an alteration for the better amongst you. Providence has allotted us many resources against the long continuance of grief, if we will give way to them, as I am sure you will, and your mind is provided with materials to counteract the ill effects of that sensibility which is the ornament and excellence of it. Do not neglect yourself in your cares for your friends, but let medicine assist your spirits, if you think distemper has any share

in the depression you complain of. Too well I know how long the body may suffer from the effects of grief, after the mind is healed and restored; take care if possible to prevent this, I conjure you!

"I know you will be glad to hear that I have hitherto enjoyed better health and spirits this summer, than for two or three past summers; and am thereby enabled to keep my very weak and unphilosophical heart in better order than when you so justly reproved its impatience, under circumstances that certainly ought not to be considered as serious evils, yet which have sometimes operated on my mind in such a manner, that I could only cry out like the philosopher of old, 'Oh! *absence* thou shalt never force me to confess thee an evil.' Yet if pain be evil, it was certainly such to me, (through my own folly I grant you) amidst a thousand blessings, undeserved, and perhaps not sufficiently attended to.

"I have spent a pleasant race week, which I little expected; but the three Miss Burrowses and a Miss Smith who is with them, came over from Margate for that week, and their company made the assemblies very agreeable to me, which would otherwise have been insufferably dull. My esteem for them increases with my intimacy; and in spite of the caution and suspicion you and Mr. C. have taught me (and which I believe will make me

very ill-natured) I am inclined to love them and approve them more than is quite consistent with my new system. Since I began to be an analyzer of characters, I have found so few people that can please me, that I am in the more danger of attaching myself too strongly to those who can. In short, numerous are the dangers and inconveniences to which you and my other sharp-sighted friend have exposed me, by tearing off the bandage from my eyes, that so happily hid from them the bad passions and sneaking views that frequently swim within an inch of the surface of many a fair smooth-looking character. I am not however quite a misanthrope yet. You own that you are, and if such is to be the consequence of prying into the souls of one's neighbours, is it not better to employ one's understanding in considering 'whether that is possible which never did or ever will happen?' or 'whether God loves an actually existing fly, better than a possible angel?' "

LETTER XXXII.

"I HOPE your head is in good order; I was told by a gentlemen t'other day, that if it was not well ballasted, it would certainly be overset by the unreasonable share of honour and praise you have gained by your late work. At the same time I was told that it had thrown the whole learned

world into the utmost astonishment, and that they could no otherwise account for the thing, or comfort themselves under it, but by attributing its excellence to the archbishop's assistance. This last part of the story provokes me, but some how or other they would fain strip the honour from our sex, and deck out one of their own with it. I question whether there will not be an act of parliament next sessions to banish you this realm, as an invader of the privileges and honours of the lords of the creation, and an occasion of stumbling to women, in the article of acknowledging their superiority."

LETTER XXXIII.

April 28, 1759.

"I FIND your rambles only serve to enhance in your esteem the beauties of Kent, towards which you bear a truly filial partiality, as appears by the compliments you contrived to pay it, on a comparison even with the rich and delightful views of Berkshire. No wonder the rude scenes you are now amongst, should be made use of as foils and contrasts to your favoured county. However they appear not without their charms as you have drawn them, and I fancy you who were wont to express so high a relish of *horrible beauty*, must find much gratification in contemplating such an

instance of the endless variety of nature. At least it makes a fine landscape in your letter, and seems not unworthy the particular notice of your muse; for I think the ladies of Parnassus have no dislike to shagged grots and barren mountains, but thrive as well amidst such vast stupendous and horrid scenes as you describe as in the more flourishing, social, and cultivated parts of the world; at least I am persuaded they will not refuse to follow you, even from smiling Kent to the rough wilds of Bristol.

"I take it for granted Mr. Johnson's Abissinian Tale has reached you; and pray tell me whether, with all your veneration for the author, you were not grievously disappointed in it? I know you have always thought me a prophane wretch about him, as well as Doctor Young; but do for once give your judgment fair play against the man's name, and tell me whether you do not think he ought to be ashamed of publishing such an ill-contrived, unfinished, unnatural, and uninstructive tale? I know you will say there is a great deal of good sense, and many fine observations in it. I allow it. But how are these fine sentences brought in? How do they suit the mouths of the speakers? And what moral is to be drawn from the fiction upon the whole? I think the only maxim one can deduce from the story is, that human life is a scene of unmixt wretchedness, and that all states and con-

ditions of it are equally miserable; a maxim which, if adopted, would extinguish hope, and consequently industry, make prudence ridiculous, and, in short, dispose men to lie down in sloth and despondency. I was so well pleased with the laudable active spirit which brought Rasselas out of the deplorable 'happy valley,' and promised myself so fine a moral from the superior happiness I supposed he was to find even in hardships, wants, and dangers, when engaged in right pursuits, to what he had experienced from the vain efforts of luxurious idleness, that I was scandalized above measure when I found that all his reasoning and experience were to end in his returning again to the rattles and babies he had been tired of even in early youth. And that his maturity and old age were to be spent in the balls and concerts he had learnt to despise soon after twenty. There is something too so strangely unnatural in drawing a young man and woman without any one passion or predominant inclination, to determine the choice of life which so puzzled their reason, that one cannot but consider them as merely ideal beings, of whose manner of feeling and acting one has no rule by which to judge. One can as easily admit the supposition of a ship supplied with a rudder and a pilot, but without either sails or oars to set it in motion. By this time I begin to fear you are angry with me, and consider me as a

strangely presumptuous animal, thus to lift up my nothingness against the giant Johnson: but I think he has built too much on the blind superstitious reverence he thinks his name exacts from the world, and I will not be one of those whom he will laugh at for being taken in to admire what he must know is unworthy of him. They say he wrote it in three mornings; but as the Spectator says, 'I never do excuse faults through haste.'"

LETTER XXXIV.

London, July 15, 1759.

"I ALLOW the justice of every thing you have said relating to Mr. Johnson and his Rasselas. I own I was very angry with him for the conclusion, considering it as a conclusion, but I have since heard that he proposes going on with the story in another volume, in which I hope he will give us antidotes for all the poisonous inferences deducible from the story as it stands at present. Alas! poor Mr. Johnson has, I fear, considered the worst side of the character of human nature, and seems to be but little acquainted with the best and happiest of its affections and sensations. Yet, though I am scandalized and grieved at the frightful picture he has drawn of family life, I cannot but admire his truly philosophical manner of placing the advantages and disadvantages of each

situation before us. Though I do not think he has always calculated them rightly, yet it seems to me to be the only rational *method* of considering whatever is interesting to us.

"Pray do you lead the life of a fine lady, or do you philosophize and write even at Bristol? I am, at present, deep in stoicism; that is to say in the Meditations of Antoninus, which strike me with surprise and admiration, when I consider the time, the station of the writer, and the consonance of his life with his principles. Pray do not you reckon him a better natured stoic than your Epictetus? He seems to me to be of the mildest and most sociable disposition imaginable, and not to set his face so bitterly against human affections as I expected. His first book pleased me more than almost any thing I ever read. I immediately set about recollecting the different virtues and excellences of my friends, and the different advantages I had reaped, or might have reaped from each. I was not before sensible, my dear Miss Carter, how much I was obliged to *you*, amongst a few more, whom I count over in my mind with more exultation and delight than a miser does his bags. I could almost have worshipped Antoninus for putting me upon the thought, which seems to be no less useful than pleasing. If you have not him by heart, as I suspect you have, do read over again his first book of Reflections, and think how I

crowed over it, and tell me whether there is any thing in mere human philosophy more admirable and instructive."

LETTER XXXV.

Salisbury, August 28, 1789.

"HAVING told you a piece of my mind concerning the way you are in, I shall now tell you something of myself, who live here uncorrupted by grandeur; who can see venison pasties without eating them, and great dinners smoke every day without envying those whose noses are always so besmoked. Who come home from an assembly at eleven, without envying those who dance till five, and who could be content to return to my little habitation, and to that poor desert place you so much depise and hate, without envying those who live in a palace. Who could prefer a *little attorney* even to my Lord Feversham, had he offered to me instead of the fair young lady he has so happily won.

"To speak seriously though, I am happier here than at Canterbury, by many degrees, and for many reasons. The place is, I believe, the most agreeable of country towns; the people, as far as I have seen, are polite and sociable; and music is the prevailing taste amongst them; a very pleasing circumstance to me. We are a numerous

family, in a noble and cheerful house; and my two young friends enliven those hours when we can escape other company. But these, alas, are few! Our grand grievance is the frequency of formal company and formal dinners, which last are, I think, amongst the worst of those many deplorable disadvantages which attend on a large fortune.

"Your friend Edward is with us, and we make a pretty little concert at home pretty often, with the assistance of the organist, and the bishop's sweet chorister, whom you heard in the Messiah, for I suppose you know *we* lent you *our* choir. Mrs. —— (who seems to be a well bred agreeable woman) inquires after you with much regard. I know little of Mr. —— yet, except in his musical capacity; but the simplicity and benevolence of his countenance and manner charm me. I have seen nothing yet out of the town except Wilton, which is the most entertaining house by way of show I ever saw, being crowded with fine pictures, statues, busts, &c. of whose excellence and originality being no manner of judge, I enjoy an uncritical pleasure in beholding them. There is one room which I fancy must be allowed to be the finest in England. The gardens are very pleasing, and are nobly watered and planted. We are soon to go to Lord Folkstone's, where, I hear, there are a few extremely fine pictures."

THE next letter announces the approach of that important event to which Miss Mulso had long looked forward with all the sanguine expectation of happiness that so warm a heart was likely to indulge.

About the end of the year 1760, Mr. Mulso unwilling longer to protract the union of two of his children, so long and so unalterably attached, as his daughter to Mr. Chapone, and his eldest son to Miss Prescott, arranged his affairs so as to admit of their both being married on the same day. He himself took up his abode with his son, while his daughter and her husband, as will appear by the following letters, removed first into lodgings in Carey-street, and afterwards to a house in Arundel-street.

LETTER XXXVI.

London, December 9, 1760.

"MY dear Miss Carter has doubtless accused me of much negligence towards her, and will probably toss down this poor despised paper as soon as she sees my hand on the cover, and debate with herself a moment whether she shall vouchsafe to read it. But after all this indignation, I know she will instantly forgive me as soon as she knows in what manner my thoughts and time have been engaged since I left Canterbury. Th

happiness of my own life, and that of my dearest brother, has been deeply interested in the transactions of these few weeks. Thank God all is now settled in the way we wished.

"Give me your congratulations my dear friend! but as much for my brother and friend as for myself; for in truth I could not have enjoyed my own happiness in an union with the man of my choice, had I been forced to leave them in the same uncomfortable state of tedious, and almost hopeless expectation, in which they have suffered so long.

"I shall rejoice to hear that you are coming soon to town, and shall hope for many a comfortable *tete-a-tete* with you in my lodgings in Carey-street; for there I must reside till Mr. Chapone can get a house that suits him, which is no easy matter, as he is so confined in point of situation. In the mean time he will carry on his business at his chambers as before. I have therefore chosen the spot nearest to them, though farther than I wish from all the rest of my friends. And now let me be no longer engrossed by selfish concerns, but inquire after your health, and that of every one whose health is necessary to your happiness. Do not think I have forgot you, even in this time of *flutteration*; indeed I have not; but my time has been so much taken up, that I have hardly touched a pen since I came to town. I

hope you will join with me in the most perfect dissent from an opinion of your favourite Johnson, 'that a married woman can have no friendship but with her husband.' I flatter myself my heart will be improved in every virtuous affection by an union with a worthy man, and that my dear Miss Carter, and all my friends, will find it more worthy of their attachment, and better qualified for the best uses of friendship, than it ever was before; at least I think it will not be less kindly disposed towards them, nor less desirous to cherish and cultivate all my valuable connexions."

LETTER XXXVII.

"I HEAR with great pleasure, my dear Miss Carter, that you are very soon expected in town. So I snatch up my pen in a hurry, to put you in good humour with me before I see you, and to tell you where you may find your old friend, in whom you will find as much affection towards you as ever, and no one alteration, I believe, but that of name, and place of abode. We are at present in lodgings in Carey-street, but have taken a house in Arundel-street, both very wide from Clargis-street, where I suppose your residence is fixed. Perverse thing! why are not you now in Saint Paul's church-yard? I ought certainly to have thanked you sooner for your kind congratulations

and good wishes. I hope, however, you will accept my thanks even now, and consider that new-married people always lead a life of hurry and engagement, which leaves them little leisure or inclination for writing letters. The drudgery of answering all the congratulatory letters, I have put upon Mr. Chapone, who, poor man, was forced to humour me a little at first. Those of true friendship, however, must not be esteemed a drudgery. Yet I believe you can conceive it possible to feel very averse to the thoughts of writing, even to a friend one dearly loves.

"I dare say you had a real pleasure on reading in the newspapers of the completion of two engagements, the length of which you had so often lamented. And I know you will be really glad to hear, that with every other circumstance of happiness my heart could wish, in the beginning of a union which promises to be the best blessing of my life, I have had the additional comfort of better health since my marriage, than I have known for a long time before it. Certainly 'a merry heart does good like medicine.' Mine rejoices almost as much for my dear brother as for myself; God be praised, we are at present a very happy family, and my dear good father, who has made us so, seems to enjoy a large share of satisfaction and pleasure in what he has

done; his cheerfulness enabled me to bear our parting with less pain than I expected.

"I have more hours to myself than I wish for, for business usually allows me very little of my husband's company, except at meals. This I should be inclined to lament as an evil, if I did not consider that the joy and complacency with which we meet, may probably by this means last longer than if we could be always together. If you *can* love a *man*, I expect you will love him, if ever you know him thoroughly. In the mean time I will be contented if you love his worst half.

"His sister, who I think is a favourite with you, is in town with the Dean of Down. Poor Mrs. Delany set out about a fortnight ago, on a very melancholy journey, into Warwickshire, to attend her sister, Mrs. Dewes, who is so ill they have but little hope of her.

"Miss Ghapone always desires to be remembered to you with true esteem and respect. I am happy in having bound her to my heart with the additional tie of sisterly love; for she is a sweet excellent creature, and would be a very great delight and blessing to me, did not Mrs. Delany so often run away with her to that ugly Ireland. I have another new sister, whom you do not know, who is also extremely amiable and good, but she too is kept at a great distance from me by her other

connexions. I have a mother too, whom her son is as proud of as she is of him. But, alas, I never saw her, and God knows whether I ever shall, for she grows infirm, and her constitution has been terribly shaken by the death of a son and a husband, both within a few years. Make haste and come to town, and till then adieu, my dear friend. Believe me ever, most affectionately,

Yours,

HESTER CHAPONE."

Carey-street, February 4, 1761.

LETTER XXXVIII.

London, July 31, 1761.

"If you were ungracious in leaving town without seeing me, I have been equally so in not sooner answering your letter. So let us, my dear Mrs. Carter, exchange an act of oblivion, which I think will be better than entering into the merits of the cause on either side; for truly I think you have hardly the shadow of an excuse for not giving me the comfort of a farewell look when you were actually at my door; and I, on the other hand, might have had some excuse, had I written two or three weeks ago, my time before that, having been greatly taken up in removing into, and settling myself in, my new house. But I certainly ought to have informed you sooner, that

I am at last tolerably settled, and more to my mind than I expected; for the house, though very small, has its *agremens*, and I don't find any ill quality in it.

"We have furnished it neatly, and the cleanliness of a house just fitted up, is not ill recommended to me by the dirt I had lived in before, in those *puddling* lodgings.

"I have just been reading Mrs. Rowe's letters from the Dead to the Living, and those called Moral and Entertaining.

"I remember you used to reproach me for not remembering them. I am extremely charmed with the first, where her luxuriant imagination has so fine a field to display itself in. But the other set of letters, which treat of matters we are more acquainted with, seem to me much too romantic and unnatural.

"Her descriptions of the state of the blessed are after my own heart, and exactly suit the rovings of my own fancy. She treats us too with some pretty poetry, here and there, on that subject. But her devotion is too poetical for me, and savours too much of the extravagancies of the mystics. When I hear persons addressing the Supreme Being in the language of the most sensual and extravagant human love, I cannot help fancying they went mad on a disappointment of that passion, when it was placed more naturally. This, however,

was not Mrs. Rowe's case, for I think she was remarkably happy in marriage. I am the more susprised that her affections broke out into such wild torrents, since they had a free course in their natural channel. I know she is a great favourite of yours, and, perhaps, you will hardly forgive this censure. I am heartily glad you love my Burrowses, who are indeed some of the most valuable persons I have ever known. They honour you sincerely. Poor Miss Amy is still complaining, and consequently her sisters are anxious and unhappy. Never were four people more strictly united in affection and friendship than those sisters and brother. I wish you were to hear Mr. Burrows preach. There is a simplicity and an earnestness in his manner more affecting than any thing I ever heard from the pulpit. His matter is not less admirable than his manner: both seem to speak the true spirit of christianity.

"Mr. Chapone desires his best compliments to you, though you never would let him be acquainted with you. One very pleasing proof of his affection for me, is, the pleasure he takes in my friends, but I have much ado to persuade him that you are of the number, as he hardly ever saw us together. 'Surely, my dear,' says he, 'if Mrs. Carter loved you, she would sometimes have spent a day with you, and then I should have

known her better. If ever she loved you, I fancy she has left it off on your being married.'

"This last idea seems to have taken strong possession of him, and I don't know whether I shall not be infected with the same jealousy, unless you convince me to the contrary next winter."

THIS was the period of her life, on which Mrs. Chapone, almost to the last hour of it, reflected, as having afforded her complete and uninterrupted happiness. Her tenderness for the lover, never experienced a moment's abatement towards the husband. She loved him with an enthusiasm that admitted not of discerning a fault in him; an affection, which, it is but justice to declare, he returned with every proof of kindness and esteem, and, during the short time their union was permitted to last, they lived together on terms of perfect harmony and mutual regard.

Always obliging and accommodating in her disposition, it cannot be questioned that she was peculiarly so to the man of her choice and the object of her fondest partiality; and the absurdity of supposing the contrary, can only be equalled by the shameless effrontery of uttering so unfounded an assertion.

The writers of the spurious production called the Life of Mrs. Chapone, in which this unpardon-

able falsehood is affirmed, have indeed sought shelter under high and most respectable authority, as will appear by the following sentence. "Her married life," says Mrs. Barbauld, speaking from personal observation, "was short, and not *very happy*. But in *what* this infelicity consisted, this lady has no where stated."

The reader will be pleased to take notice that the "*personal observation*" must have been the invention of the moment. Mrs. Barbauld could have been but a child at the time of Mr. Chapone's death, and was not acquainted with his widow until many years after that event.

This justly celebrated author of so many invaluable works, will feel herself but little obliged to these writers for being so kind as to supply, from their own imaginations, what they observe she has omitted; and still less so, for their obvious misconstruction of her words. If a rumour had reached her that Mrs. Chapone was not happy in her married life, Mrs. Barbauld certainly would not be disposed to assign as the cause of it, Mrs. Chapone's "*want of temper for the cultivation of domestic tranquillity.*" Her own intimate knowledge of her heart and character must have precluded such a supposition; and indeed Mrs. Barbauld has expressed, in conversation, her surprise and concern that so unjust an accusation should have appeared in print, and her decided opinion that it ought to be contradicted.

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There yet survive one or two of her most intimate friends, who remember Mrs. Chapone during her married life, and can testify her unceasing fondness for her husband, and her invariable acquiescence in all his wishes. Those of her nearest relations, who only remember her from a later point of time, have been frequent witnesses of the affecting tenderness with which she spake of him, whenever she could assume resolution to do so; and she preserved a miniature picture of him, which she professed that she seldom allowed herself to contemplate, because she thought it improper to indulge the sensations of exquisite grief and regret it always occasioned.

The season of content which her nuptials afforded, was, however, but of short duration. In something less than ten months after they were married, Mr. Chapone was seized with a fever, which was, from the beginning, pronounced fatal, and terminated his existence after about a week's illness.

The deep distress of his afflicted wife, together with the alarming seizure which nearly deprived her of life, the immediate consequence of this severe blow, will be best related by the following letters from her amiable and excellent friend, the eldest Miss Burrows, who hastened to town from Tunbridge, upon the first intelligence of her friend's pitiable situation.

LETTER XXXIX.

FROM MISS BURROWS TO MRS. CARTER.

Tunbridge Wells, September 17, 1761.

"MADAM,

"IT is upon a very melancholy occasion I take the liberty of addressing you. Mr. Chapone has lain dangerously ill of a fever for these last ten days. The accounts we received this morning put us out of all hope of his recovery. Being well apprized of your affection for dear Mrs. Chapone, and the bad state of your spirits, we were fearful, had you first met with the account of this melancholy event in the newspaper, it might have had a bad effect upon your health; we thought it therefore most prudent to apprize you of it by this means. Our letters of to-day informed us they apprehended him dying all last night; but that she behaves with most becoming fortitude and christian patience. I dread the consequences of it upon her health in case the dreadful worst should happen; and there seems to be but little reason to flatter ourselves it will not.

"I shall go to London to-morrow, in hopes of being some little comfort to poor Mrs. Chapone, who at present I fear is a very miserable being. If you are desirous of further intelligence, you may command me, by directing for me at our lodgings in Southampton-street. If it shall please

God to give us any hopes of Mr. Chapone's recovery, you may depend upon hearing from me an account of it; otherwise you may suppose the worst, for the physicians give no hopes at all. You will be comforted, I doubt not, as we are, to hear she bears her present suspense with so much meekness and resolution.

I am, dear Madam,

Your obliged humble servant,

MARY BURROWS."

LETTER XL.

FROM MISS BURROWS.

London, September 22, 1761.

"I WAS very sorry your letter came so late last night that it was impossible to answer it by the return of the post. I am afraid the suspense has been very painful to you. Mr. Chapone died on Saturday night, about ten o'clock. She had not been in his room since Monday last; for as her presence was judged to be very hurtful to him, she submitted to the advice of her friends not to continue her attendance upon him: she therefore was not made acquainted with his death till Sunday morning. She received the news of it with her accustomed meekness, and has, by the whole of her behaviour during his illness, and since his *death,* shewn an example of patience and resigna-

tion that is quite astonishing. You would hardly believe me were I to describe to you her calmness and composure, as you are so well acquainted with the strength of her passion for him. Could I tell you half the noble things she says and does, it must convince you of the sincerity of her religion, and infinitely increase your affection for her.

"Mr. and Mrs. Mulso are exceedingly friendly to her, and have kindly invited me to their house in Rathbone-Place, together with my dear afflicted friend. I told her I was going to write to you, and she desired me to give her kind love to you. Indeed all her friends, and their kindness to her, are remembered by her, particularly at this time, with so much gratitude and affection, that it quite surprises me, and is a pleasing mark of her gratitude to heaven for those blessings she still possesses."

LETTER XLI.

FROM MISS BURROWS.

October 5, 1761.

"As I feel myself deeply interested in the happiness of my dear Mrs. Chapone, it gave me a very sensible pleasure to be the bearer of a letter so happily calculated, by its caution as well as kindness, to convince her of your friendship for her. I am persuaded this is a blessing she highly

esteems; of course she was deeply touched by this proof of your so tenderly sympathizing with her in her present afflictions. She would herself acknowledge the sense she has of your kindness, but her ill state of health renders her incapable of writing to any body. Whether this trial will not be a greater shock to her constitution, than time, or her resigned patient temper of mind will be ever able to repair, is at present doubtful. I cannot help repeating to you, that she suffers herself to be the most consoled by the kindness of her friends I ever saw any body in her situation: indeed, both Mr. and Mrs. Mulso are as benevolent, kind, and tender to her as is possible. She has now a kind of intermittent fever upon her, which leaves her better in the day-time, though it never is quite off. When she is tolerably easy she is very fond of being read to, and is particularly delighted with many passages in the psalms, as she finds there her own sensations so exactly, and so touchingly described. I wish, dear madam, you could recommend to her any author, book, or treatise calculated to amuse and dictate to a mind, delicate, refined, and afflicted, as hers is.

"I find myself quite at a loss in this search, and therefore fly to you, well knowing (besides the more obvious reasons for such a dependence upon you) your affection for her would make any

task pleasant, by which you might procure her any present ease, or future comfort."

"P. S. The above was written (as you will see by the date) some days since. An accident prevented my sending it to the post immediately, and ever since poor Mrs. Chapone has been growing worse. I have been waiting her amendment to give you notice of it, for I was unwilling to let you know how ill she was, fearing the anxiety might be hurtful to you at such a distance. I take the liberty of sending it just as it was written, to convince you, dear Madam, it was not without good reason I detained from you the information you desired in your last letter. She has had a pretty high fever upon her ever since Monday last, has suffered much in her head, stomach, and spirits, but this afternoon finds herself much better, and we all hope will get some rest, as her fever is considerably abated. She has had hardly any sleep for these last four nights and days, which seemed to be an alarming circumstance. Though the doctor has never pronounced any immediate danger, he and all her friends have been apprehensive for the consequences of the violent restlessness that has attended her. If you desire to hear how she does, I shall with great pleasure comply with your commands, to prevent your indulging any groundless fears. I will promise to take the liberty of writing by the next

post if she should be worse; so that if you hear nothing from me you may depend on her being better. I am very sorry to raise these apprehensions in your mind, but thought if I neglected writing any longer, you might justly charge me with carelessness.

"Friday night, October 9."

LETTER XLII.

FROM MISS BURROWS.

October 11.

"I CAN now have the pleasure of informing you Mrs. Chapone is much better. The little alteration there has been in her (till within a day or two) since I wrote last, has been my reason for not giving you any intelligence concerning her. She has had a fever constantly every night, and been very low and dispirited in the day: she has now been in bed twenty-three days. I fear it is with some regret she returns again to the world; for had it been the will of God, I believe she would have rejoiced in the prospect of death, though it is not without much thankfulness she finds herself released from all her pains. She is exceedingly low and faint, and I fear, though she should have no unforeseen drawbacks, it will be a long time before she recovers her strength. The

weak state she is at present in, does indeed make her case truly pitiable."

LETTER XLIII.

FROM MISS BURROWS.

October 15.

"IT is with great pleasure I can inform you Mrs. Chapone is much better, we hope in a fair way of recovery. We were all exceedingly alarmed about her on Sunday and Monday; but as the doctors said it would in all probability be decided in forty-eight or twenty-four hours, I thought it was a pity to send you this melancholy account. On Monday evening she fell into a doze, and continued sleeping in an uneasy way till last night about nine o'clock. She lay quite stupid and almost insensible to every thing that passed; when she was awake complained of being like a log; and, in short, frightened us excessively, as we were anxiously expecting the fatal change that twenty-four hours might make in her. Thank God, this change has been in her favour, for she has had a charming night, is much refreshed by her quiet sleep, and eased of many of her pains. Her pains, indeed, have not appeared so violent for the two last days as before; but till this morning, it seemed uncertain whether this inattention

to her sufferings, was not the result of insensibility, rather than any real abatement of them.

"When she is well enough to receive it, I shall deliver your kind message, and comfort her by telling her you intend to write to her."

LETTER XLIV.

FROM MISS BURROWS.

November 11, 1761.

"I TAKE the liberty of once more addressing you, as I imagine your solicitude for our dear friend makes a confirmation of her recovery necessary to your happiness. She has, indeed, (according to your agreeable prophecy) in a most surprising manner every day gained strength and spirits; eats heartily, and sits up all day. She thinks herself exceedingly obliged to you for your tender, friendly manner of remembering her, as well in those letters she has received, as in those addressed to me. Indeed, madam, your friendship is a treasure she very highly prizes; I hope it is a blessing it will please God to continue long to her.

"As soon as she is recovered enough to come out, we are in hopes of her spending a month or two at our house: heartily do I wish we could flatter her with the hopes of seeing you here, as I really believe she would be much comforted by

your conversation. May we not hope the business you are at present engaged in, may give us some chance for the enjoyment of this pleasure ?

"I hope Mrs. Chapone will have the comfort of often hearing from you: it will be a long time, I fear, before she will have the power of writing."

THESE letters bear sufficient testimony of the unalterable attachment of Mrs. Chapone to her husband, and of the sincerity of her sorrow at his death. Contrary to the expectations of her friends, and (as will appear by the next letter) of her own wishes, she by degrees recovered from the dreadful illness which that sorrow had occasioned. The following letter to Mrs. Carter displays her feelings and character in the most interesting point of view. While it evinces the keenness of her sufferings, it exemplifies the firmness of those religious principles, which taught her so patiently to submit to the dispensations of the all-wise disposer of events.

LETTER XLV.

TO MRS. CARTER.

Southampton-street, December 6, 1761.

"MY dear Mrs. Carter's most kind and friendly letters, and solicitude for my welfare, claim

the earliest acknowledgments in my power. Therefore one of the first uses I make of pen and ink, is to assure her of my grateful sense of it, and of the truest return of affection and friendship. I have been very near death, and at the time he threatened most, it was the most earnest wish of my heart to meet and embrace him. But I bless God I am restored not only to life, but to a sense of the great mercy indulged me in the grant of a longer term of trial. It must be my own fault if the life which is given me be not of the highest value to me, though very unlikely to be a happy one. It is, however, attended with such blessings even now, as ought to reconcile me to it. I mean particularly many kind and excellent friends, who strive as much as possible to alleviate my irreparable loss, and to supply me with every comfort I am capable of feeling. Nor are their endeavours vain, for it has pleased God to support my weak heart, and infirm spirits, in a wonderful manner, even from the first of an affliction, which I once thought it impossible for me to survive. My illness has been a providential circumstance in my favour. The stupidity in which I lay some weeks, was then a happy relief; and the natural pleasure of returning health and strength, is now such an alleviation of painful sentiments, that I have many cheerful hours, in which I can highly relish the conversation of my

amiable friends the Miss Burrowses, with whom I now am on a visit for a few weeks. I endeavour as much as possible to welcome every pleasing sensation, and to make the most of those hours in which my thoughts can be led from subjects of affliction. I reckon up the treasures I have left, and among these the friendship of my dear Mrs. Carter is not forgotten. You are so obligingly solicitous about my circumstances, that I would willingly inform you of the state of them, if I had any certainty about them. But my dear Mr. Chapone's affairs were left in great confusion and perplexity by his sudden death, which happened just at the time of year in which he should have settled his accounts, and made out his bills. As these are very considerable, his estate must suffer a great loss from this circumstance. At present things are in a very melancholy state, and my own prospects such as would probably have appeared very dreadful to me at any other time. But the deprivation of the chief source of all my worldly happiness, has, I think, made me less sensible to other calamities."

THE conclusion of this letter shews, that in addition to what she esteemed her heaviest calamity, Mrs. Chapone had some pecuniary embarrassments to encounter. This, however,

was but a secondary consideration with her, nor does it ever appear to have materially affected her peace of mind. Though her circumstances no longer allowed of her keeping a house, she was content to retire upon a small, but in those days decent income, into lodgings, where she continued to make a respectable appearance.

In less than two years after the death of Mr. Chapone, she experienced another severe privation in the loss of her father, of which she gives an affecting account in a letter to Mrs. Carter, which it is not thought necessary should appear. He left her an addition to her fortune, but that, in her opinion, was no compensation for the loss of so excellent and kind a parent.

As no important occurrences took place for several years after these events, we shall here present all the series of extracts from her correspondence with Mrs Carter, which it is presumed may furnish some entertainment to the reader.

LETTER XLVI.

July 6, 1762.

"I AM grown so bad a correspondent myself, my dear Mrs. Carter, that I am very ill entitled to the apologies you condescended to make me, nor will I trouble you with any on my side, as I know I may depend on your indulgence. As this

ought to be mutual, you may assure yourself that though it is always a very sincere pleasure to me to hear from you, I will not even wish for it, when it would be attended with pain or inconvenience to yourself. For my own part, writing is become so irksome an employment to me, that were it not the purchase of a comfort I cannot do without, that of hearing of the welfare of my friends, I believe I should never choose to touch a pen. But this, with other ill effects of bad spirits, and a heart ill at ease, will I hope wear off in time. I bless God I am better in all respects than I could hope to be. Indeed I do not think my constitution at all impaired; on the contrary I think it is now able to sustain what in some periods of my life would have sunk me to the greatest weakness and dejection. How much am I, and how much are the Miss Burrowses obliged to you, for the very valuable and delightful acquisition you have made for us in Mrs. Montagu's acquaintance. We all congratulated each other, as on a piece of high preferment, when she was so kind to invite us to dinner the other day; as we looked upon it as a happy token of her inclination to admit us to something like intimacy. I begin to love her so much that I am quite frightened at it, being conscious my own insignificance will probably always keep me at a distance that is not at all convenient for loving. We had no

other company at dinner except Mr. ——, a very clever agreeable man; I want to know something about his inside. Did you ever dissect his heart? or is it like another gentleman's of whom Mrs. M. said that to look into his heart, would be to spoil one's own pleasure, like a child that breaks his plaything to see the inside of it. 'Twas a great pleasure to me to observe that Mrs. M. looked much better than when you were last in town."

LETTER XLVII.

Frith-street, December 11, 1763.

"I HOPE your next will tell me that you are soon coming to town. We stand in great need of you and Mrs. Montagu, to produce some pleasing ideas in our minds; for London is now in such a state, that every conversation is tinctured with melancholy and horror. My friends, Miss Burrowses, reproach me often with my insensibility to public affairs, and indeed I generally am guarded, by a sanguine constitution and a most profound ignorance, from those terrors about future evils to the public, which embitter the lives of some of my acquaintance. But even I begin now to be affected with some melancholy apprehensions, and to feel myself shocked at the unbounded torrent of licentiousness which prevails every day more amongst us. Alas, how little able are

we, either as a nation or as individuals, to stand the trial of great prosperity! and how constantly are outward blessings counterbalanced by internal evils! How ought this consideration to lessen our dread of calamity, and our impatience under it.

"I am much pleased to hear of Mrs. ——'s being a mother. I think if happiness exists here below, it must be found in her house, for her husband's letters and her own convey such ideas of it as are hardly to be met with any where else. May she never feel the loss of it! I think this last addition must complete it; for I am not of your opinion that children are not a reasonable object of our wishes, as far as we are permitted to wish for any temporal good. The sensations of parental fondness are, I suppose, the most delightful of any our nature is capable of, except the conjugal; and these mutually assist each other and complete domestic happiness. The dangers and sorrows which this affection often brings with it, seem to me to shew the value of its blessings, and are no more than the common conditions on which we enjoy every advantage relative to this world.

"Adieu, my dear Mrs. Carter; hasten to town: this world has nothing for me but a few friends, and I grudge the absence of any of them. Do not imagine from this last sentence that I am in a state of gloom or discontent. I thank God that is not the case. My desires of happiness are as

ardent as ever. The world offers not a shadow to content them; but the hopes of a christian keep them from preying on the soul, and producing that restless anxiety which always attends them whilst any thing on earth is their object. Yet at times a certain weariness of life, and a sense of insignificance and insipidity, deject my spirits. On such occasions I recall that beautiful thought of Milton's, in the sonnet which concludes with 'They also serve who stand and wait.' And then I conclude that the kindest of Beings has placed me exactly in the station fittest for me, and that it is my own fault if I do not find both occupation and enjoyment in serving him in the way he has allotted for me. Pray for me that I may do so, my dear friend, and believe me,

Ever most affectionately yours,

HESTER CHAPONE."

LETTER XLVIII.

"I LEARN that Mrs. Montagu is expected in town this very day, and I hope it will not be many days before I have the pleasure of seeing her, though I shall do it with an awkward consciousness about me, because my friends at Knight's tell me I ought to have written to her on the subject of her book. Could she read in my heart the true reason of my silence, it would be a higher compliment than any

I could have written, for it was really no other than the high sense I have of the merit of her work, which made me despair of expressing what I thought, and ashamed of offering praise unworthy of it. As to the faults she desired me to find, she should have taken care to supply them. I am struck with beauties in every line, but do not recollect being struck with any faults, except those of the printer, which are indeed very numerous. I do most sincerely think it as elegant and brilliant a composition as I ever read; and what particularly charms me, is the fund of good sense and sound judgment it shews, in the midst of that profusion of wit which in other works so often serves to cover a deficiency of good sense. I am told the world has been much distrest to find out the author, and has given it to some of the first wits of the other sex, little inclined to attribute the honour of it to ours. But I flatter myself it begins to be whispered all round the town, for I can't bear the thought of its being kept a secret. I have been rather shabby of late since the wet weather came. My enemy, Winter, begins to lay his fangs upon me. I hate him completely now, as he does not bring my friends about me, the only service the hideous bald-pate ever did me. I now set all my affection on Spring, who comes decked with snow-drops, and Carters, and Burrowses, and such like white and lovely virgins.

"Adieu, my dear friend: you must be very well, for Mrs. Montagu and Mr. Pepys have agreed to cut out work for you. They have routed out an unknown Greek poet, who is as precious as a Torso out of Herculaneum, and whom you are to furbish up and translate; so get your head in good order."

LETTER XLIX.

Denton, August 19, 1770.

"YOUR last letter to Mrs. Montagu gave us both sufficient ease of mind to enjoy the comfort of abusing you, and calling you names, for having unmercifully kept us in anxiety so long. After the sad account you gave of yourself in your letter to me, how came you to forget the duty of following such an account as quickly as possible with the news of your recovery? Did you think we were such "unnatural hags," as to have no concern about you? or did you think it good for us to be punished with fears and apprehensions about you, whilst you were rambling about old houses and dreaming of enchantments? Mr. D—— too, wrote about Coal, without mentioning your name; however I now enjoy a double satisfaction, in knowing you are recovered, and in having an opportunity of finding a fault in you; which is very comfortable now and then to one

who likes to be your friend, and consequently does not like to see you getting almost out of sight, and quite out of reach, into the stars. I am grown as bold as a lion with Mrs. Montagu, and fly in her face whenever I have a mind; in short I enjoy her society with the most perfect *gout*, and find my love for her takes off my fear and awe, though my respect for her character continually increases. Her talents, when considered as ornaments, only excite admiration; but when one sees them diligently applied to every useful purpose of life, and particularly to the purposes of benevolence, they command one's highest esteem. I have had no other alloy to the pleasures her company gives me, and those which the variety of scenes she has introduced me to afford, but that of seeing her health so imperfect. Though she has not been quite ill above two or three times, yet she has not been well; but thank God she is much better than she has been. How was I delighted, my dear friend, and how did I wish for you at Hagley! Had it not been for Mrs. Montagu's illness there, I think I could hardly have been more highly gratified than by the enjoyment of that most enchanting place, and of Lord Lyttelton's company. He is always amiable, but surely never so much as in his own house. As the weather would not allow us to be much out of doors, my lord consoled us

by reading a good deal of the new volume of his history. Whether it was owing to his reading and Mrs. Montagu's comments, or to any real superiority, I know not; but it appeared to me still more admirable than any of the former parts of the work."

LETTER L.

Denton, October 12.

"I AM extremely sorry, my dear Mrs. Carter, to hear from Mrs. Montagu that the letter she received from you yesterday brings a very indifferent account of your health, and that you are confined from all enjoyment of the fine weather. As this fine weather you talk of, seems only an aggravation of the evil of confinement to you, I wish you could have imported some of it to us in the north, for our share of sunshine has been very small. I could have borne all the unkindness of the sky at other times with patience, had it but smiled upon us at Taymouth; but there its cruelty was indeed afflicting. You have heard of our rambles from a pen that could add even to the beauties of the islands; but Mrs. Montagu tells me she has left the task of description to me; a task which I can by no means undertake: but I know I shall communicate to you some part of my pleasure, by simply telling you that I never

enjoyed so much from any excursion. The rude magnificence of nature, in the degree it is displayed in Scotland, was quite new to me, and furnished me with ideas I never before was in possession of. At Taymouth indeed every conceivable beauty of landscape is united with the sublime. Such a lake! such variegated hills rising from its banks! such mountains and such cloud-cap'd rocks rising behind them! such a delicious green valley to receive the "sweet winding Tay!" such woods! such cascades!—in short I am wild that you and all my romantic friends should see it; for even a Milton's pen, or a Salvator Rosa's pencil, would fail to give you a complete idea of it. Several more sweet places we saw, which would have made capital figures, had they not been eclipsed by Lord Bredalbane's. My intellectual pleasures were as great in their kind, from the conversations of Mrs. Montagu and Dr. Gregory, who accompanied us in all our journeys, and is one of the most agreeable men I ever met with. Many other personages of note were drawn together by the magnetism of Mrs. Montagu at Edinburgh.

"There is great pleasure you know in seeing live authors, which makes me regret that David Hume could not come to the meeting. Dr. Robertson we saw a good deal of: I like him well. The greatest pleasure I derive from this journey,

which has afforded me so much, is that of seeing Mrs. Montagu in a much more comfortable state of health than before; and in a way, I hope, to receive lasting benefit from the course into which her Scotch physicians have put her, which is different from all that was tried before; and hitherto it has certainly agreed with her. She talks of moving southward the beginning of the week after next; and I shall be sorry if she is obliged to defer it longer, for I think neither she nor I are well qualified for a winter journey of such length.

"I am much obliged to you for sending Mrs. ——'s paper to Lady Dartry, and for your kind intention of bringing me acquainted with her. I can have no doubt of the value of an acquaintance with a person you esteem so much, but have great doubt of answering the expectations your partial friendship may have raised. However that prove, I shall certainly think myself much honoured by her notice. I am a little afraid that the advantage of your's and Mrs. Montagu's kind opinion of me, will enlarge my acquaintance more than is consistent with my manner of living in town. It will be necessary for me to guard against this, though, in other circumstances, nothing could be more desirable than the acquisition of such acquaintance as your circle affords, and on whose account Mr. Burrows rejoices that he never, in any of his sermons, launched out into any common place against the rich and great."

LETTER LI.

Farnham Castle, September 21.

"You will hardly believe, my dear Mrs. Carter, how often I think of you, and how often I have wished and intended to thank you for your last most kind letter, which I received just before I left London: but the difficulty of getting time enough to myself to write a letter here, cannot be conceived by any one who has not been in the situation. My thoughts however are free, and they have often dwelt on you, and on the candour and friendship expressed in your letter. I entirely agree with you on the justice of your severity towards those, who, to gratify their own vanity, destroy the principles, and consequently the happiness of their fellow creatures. If the infidel writers act on such motives, and see the consequences of what they do, they are without excuse, and ought to be detested as the enemies of human kind. Nor did your just resentment against them, ever lead me to suspect you of being deficient in candour towards innocent error, or modest doubtfulness. Of this I have given you proofs, and you on your side have confirmed my affiance in you in the kindest manner. Since I wrote to you last, I have read five volumes of Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History, which I think affords sufficient proof that the canon of scripture receiv-

ed by us, is the same that was received in the earliest ages of christianity, and that the spurious ones were never accepted in those ages, except by a few schismatics. This certainly is a good foundation to build other proofs upon. I have read Mrs. Scott's life of D'Aubigne with much pleasure, and think the style much superior to any thing else I have seen of hers. I fancy she had some assistance in that article. How surprising it is that Sully should mention so great a man as D'Aubigne so seldom, and with such contempt! never taking notice of any of his exploits, and speaking of him as a man remarkable only for sedition and slander! How constantly is great vanity accompanied by envy! I always thought Sully abounded in the former, but did not know before that he was so strongly tinctured by the latter. I do not condemn Henry for not loving D'Aubigne; for certainly, with all his great qualities, he was inexcusably insolent to the king, and shewed no personal regard for him, nor good will to monarchy. His zeal was confined to the Huguenot party; for I cannot place it all to the account of religion. Had the free exercise of that been all they aimed at, the edict of Nantz would have quieted them, and we should not have seen D'Aubigne concurring in an attempt to rekindle the war which had so nearly destroyed his country, as soon as the weakness of administration

afforded an opportunity for it. I think him therefore no true patriot, though a zealous religionist. His history is however entertaining, and characters interesting. I hope the work meets with applause in the world."

LETTER LII.

Mill Hill, November 30, 1772.

"It was not in a palace, my dear Mrs. Carter, but in my own little quiet dwelling, where only I can read or think to any purpose, that I got through five volumes of Lardner, who is indeed the most tiresome writer I ever had to do with; yet being very ignorant of ecclesiastical history, I met with some accounts of the fathers, which entertained me, though the extracts from their writings by no means raised my veneration for their judgments. What Lardner undertakes, is to prove that the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles now canonical, were received by the earliest christians, and reverenced as the writings of those whom we ascribe them to. And that the spurious ones which appeared after them were received only by a few schismatics in the early ages. Of this I think he produces sufficient testimony. The doctrine of immortality is a Gospel of such glad tidings, that less evidence than that of the apostles would dispose one readily to receive it. Such

wisdom is from above; and God seems to raise up extraordinary lights in almost all countries at some season or other, to guide the human mind to some of the great truths of morality, and to awaken the hope of immortality. Amidst all the darkness I labour under, I trust in God this cheering view will never be taken from me; and that I shall attain to a state of more information in a future life, if not in this.

"I suppose you read of Miss Ord's marriage in the papers. I had a letter not long ago from Mrs. Ord, in which she speaks of Mr. Bigge in the highest terms, and of her daughter's happiness; but very feelingly of her own loss, which is indeed a severe one; for I never saw a more amiable and perfect friendship between a mother and daughter, than subsists with them; and to give up the first place in the heart where one has garnered up one's chief delight, to part with her constant companionship, and to know that it is in the power of another to carry her to ever so great a distance, is what self-love must feel in spite of generosity."

LETTER LIII.

Farnham Castle, July 20.

"I AM much obliged by the kind interest you take in the success of my publication, which has

indeed been far beyond my expectation. The bookseller is preparing a second edition with all haste, the whole of the first being gone out of his hands, which, considering that he printed off fifteen hundred at first, is an extraordinary quick sale. I attribute this success principally to Mrs. Montagu's name and patronage, and secondly to the world's being so fond of being educated, that every book on that subject is well received. My friends all fret and scold at me for having sold my copy, and grudge poor Walter his profits. But for my part I do not repent what I have done, as I am persuaded the book would not have prospered so well in my hands as in his. Though I love money reasonably well, yet I fear I have still more vanity than avarice, and am therefore very happy in the approbation the letters meet with, though my pockets are not the heavier. I have had within these few days a very kind, long letter from Mrs. Montagu, with a very satisfactory account of the improvement of her health, and of the success of her truly laudable zeal for Dr. Beattie. I am sincerely delighted to hear of the honour he receives, and of the probability of his sharing in more substantial rewards. What delight must our admirable friend enjoy in the power of raising merit into such lustre! Her activity in its behalf is unequalled, and the noble use which she makes of that influence her own

celebrity gives her, entitles her to a much higher praise, than even those talents to which she owes her power. She seems at present sincerely weary of the great world and its fatiguing homage, and heartily to enjoy repose and retirement. But the return of winter will awaken the relish of those pleasures, which are providentially annexed to such a shining but laborious course, as a fit spur to such a spirit as hers, to quit inglorious ease. I know of nothing harder to define than the limits of innocence in the love of praise. To condemn it entirely, seems to me unphilosophical and unjust; yet the danger of excess in it is so great, that it threatens to swallow up all real virtue. Tell me what you think on this subject, and how you have preserved your mind from vanity, amidst all that could gratify and inflame it? I am inclined to think that the love of praise, like all our natural passions, is in itself innocent, and only becomes criminal when it seeks gratification at the expense of duty. Whenever it in any way interferes with our love to God, or to our fellow creatures, it must cease to be innocent; but the difficulty is to know when it is so. I know you will refer me to Mrs. Talbot's excellent dialogue upon vanity; but though I admire much of what she says upon it, she does not wholly satisfy me; and I will not let you off from this discussion.

"You do not mention your health in your last, which, though in general it is construed into good news, does not satisfy from you, because I know how much you hate complaining. As you equally love to give pleasure, I rather fear your silence is a sign you had not a very good account to give of yourself. However, I desire always to have some account of your health, be it good or bad.

"My most earnest good wishes will ever attend you, for I am ever my dear Mrs. Carter's, &c."

LETTER LIV.

Deanery, Winchester, August 31.

"I THANK you, my dear Mrs. Carter, for your kind letter, and for complying with my request, by giving me your opinion on the subject of the love of praise. I am pleased to find that our sentiments agree perfectly. Moralists are too apt to deny to virtue the enjoyment of those pleasures, which providence meant to be her attendants, and a kind of foretaste of her rewards: so long as these pleasures are only the consequences, and not the motive of virtuous actions, all is safe. But I own I think there is great need to watch over the heart in this repect, lest the relish of them, as consequences, may degenerate into making them the end of our exertions."

LETTER LV.

"I AM sorry you have suffered from the rheumatism, though I like it better in your foot than in your head. Were you ever suspected of the gout? Methinks it would be worth your while to be laid by the heels once a year (as little as you like confinement) to be rid of the headach and rheumatic pains for the rest of the year: therefore when you get it to your toes again, pray nurse it well, and encourage it with flannel. I had the pleasure of hearing from Mrs. Montagu a few days ago, and am happy to find that her health has not suffered by the affliction she has sustained. My friend Mr. Pepys sent me a long and most affecting account of the death of good Lord Lyttelton, which has confirmed and increased my veneration and love for his character. Poor Mr. Pepys is a sincere mourner for him, but says he hopes to be the better man as long as he lives, for having been a witness of the last touching scene of his admirable friend.

"I have read through Hawksworth's Account of the Voyages of Cook, &c. I mean as much of them as is readable, for the greater part is only so to navigators. 'Tis a melancholy kind of reading! What an idea does it give one of the state of near half the Globe! and how hard is it to restrain one's wishes to penetrate into the hidden

counsels of God, to find out the reason of so great a part of the human species being left so destitute both of corporeal and intellectual good! If the attainment of virtue and happiness is the end of our being, how should it be that the inhabitants of Otaheite have no consciousness of evil, in the most detestable and pernicious practices? These are things that cannot but excite my wonder, but I think they will never shake my belief in an overruling Providence, which is not merely speculative, but a sentiment that I seem to feel irresistibly. I think nothing can be more injudicious than Hawksworth's discussion of that subject in his preface. To many it appears impious, but I think his meaning is free from any irreligious tendency; it however may hurt and unsettle the principles of others, and was quite *hors de place* in such a work. I don't think he has gained credit by it in any respect, so he must content himself with money. There is a very small part of this large and expensive work that affords the least entertainment, and some of the reflections and remarks of the author appear to me of very little value. Upon the whole I was, like every body else that I know, who has read the work, rather disappointed. Have you seen it?"

LETTER LVI.

Wardour Street, December 14.

"I AM sorry the complaint in your foot turned to no better account. I am sure I have no malice to the poor dear foot, (for I love the ground it goes on,) other than in kindness to the head; and if that can reap no profit by laying the other by the heels, e'en let the foot traverse the earth at pleasure. As to rheumatism, it belongs to us both. I am persuaded that whatever might originally have been the case in my face, rheumatism has at present a great share in it.

"Poor Doctor Hawksworth! His death happened at an ill time for his fame, and one cannot but wish it had pleased God to take him out of the world before he had cast a shade on a reputation so very respectable as a moral and religious writer. Many suppose that the censures of the world occasioned his death; but I am not very ready to believe in such kind of causes, which are always assigned upon the remotest probability.

"Mrs. R——'s death was undoubtedly occasioned by the shock she received from that of her daughter, who came to pay her a morning visit, was taken with violent fits, which flung her into labour, was brought to bed at Parson's Green, and seemed in a good way for a fortnight, when one night Mrs. R—— was waked with the news

that her fits had returned, and that she was dying. The poor mother got up in time to see her die, and immediately said she had taken her death's wound, and should not long survive. She died within a fortnight. Though the circumstance is so dreadful that one cannot hear of it without being shocked, one can scarce refrain from smiling at her will, in which she has left particular directions to be buried either on a Sunday or a Thursday. These were her lucky days when living; but I wonder what sort of luck she thought they would bring her in the grave."

LETTER LVII.

June 15, 1777.

"MANY thanks to you, my dear Mrs. Carter, for your most kind letter. I have been very little at home since I received it, or should have been quicker in my acknowledgments; for indeed the great pleasure it conveyed to me, demanded them immediately. I hope there is no harm in being exquisitely gratified by the approbation you are so good as to express on a second reading of my little publications; the hope which you confirm, of their being capable of doing some good, has indeed afforded me an inexpressible satisfaction, which, as far as I know my own heart, is not founded in vanity. It appeases, in some measure, that uneasy

sense of helplessness and insignificancy in society, which has often depressed and afflicted me; and gives me some comfort with respect to the poor account I can give of, 'That one talent which is death to hide.'

"The testimony of a friend, and particularly of such a friend, is far more precious than that of the public voice, had it been even as universal as you partially suppose; and is laid up in the choicest cabinet of my heart, along with every other endearing proof of your friendship and goodness to me.

"I suppose you have heard a great deal of the Abbé Reynal, who is in London. I fancy you would have served him as Dr. Johnson did, to whom when Mrs. Vesey introduced him, he turned from him, and said he had read his book and would have nothing to say to him. I am told that his wit flows in an unceasing torrent, and instead of 'spitting a pearl every minute,' it is one continued chain of pearls which issues from his mouth. I have not been in the way to gather any of them. I should like to see him as a spectacle, but should no more desire his acquaintance than Doctor Johnson, for there is an impertinence in French philosophy that turns my stomach."

LETTER LVIII.

Hadley, July 30.

"I AM sorry, but not surprised, my dear Mrs. Carter, to find that your health has suffered by the strange unnatural behaviour of the elements this summer. It is more to be wondered at that I, who am usually as much affected by skyey influence as any body, have continued uncommonly well since I have been here; and the delightful society I am in, makes good amends for the want of those enjoyments which the weather precludes.

"The Abbé Reynal dined at Mrs. Boscawen's at Glanvilla, about ten days ago, and she was so obliging to ask Mrs. A. Burrows and me to meet him in the afternoon. I was exceedingly entertained, and not a little amazed, (notwithstanding all I had heard about him) by the unceasing torrent of wit and stories, not unmixed with good sense, which flowed from him; he had held on at the same rate from one at noon, (when he arrived at Glanvilla) and we heard that he went the same evening to Mrs. Montagu's, in Hill-street, and kept on his speed till one in the morning. In the hour and half I was in his company, he uttered as much as would have made him an agreeable companion for a week, had he allowed time for answers. You see such a person can only be pleasing as a thing to wonder at once or twice. His

conversation was, however, perfectly inoffensive, which is more than his writings promise: his vivacity, and the vehemence of his action, (which, however, had not any visible connexion with his discourse) were amusing to me, who am little accustomed to foreigners. Mrs. Boscawen is a very good neighbour to us here, and a most delightful companion every where. I never knew her in finer spirits than of late. One could not but make a comparison much to her advantage, between the overwhelming display of the Abbé's talents, and that natural, polite, and easy flow of wit and humour which enlivens her conversation."

LETTER LIX.

Old Alresford, Hants.

"My dear Mrs. Carter's long-lost letter did at last come to my hands, very dirty on the outside, but very elegant in the inward and intellectual part. I know I have no chance of another till I have duly and truly paid my thanks for this; therefore I need no other motive for following my letter to Miss S—— with another to you. But moreover I know you will both be glad to hear that my dreaded journey is got over without any disaster, and that neither of us poor old infirm mortals failed in the way. As to my aunt, she behaved the best of the two upon the road, where, to my

sorrow, we spent three times as many hours as were necessary, because she chose to go in a hired chariot, with the same horses, and sleep on the road; but I took Pamela with me, (which I had not read since my enthusiasm for the author,) and screamed it in her ears as much as my lungs would permit. I must own it appeared somewhat different from what I thought of it thirty years ago; yet I still see, in each of Richardson's works, amazing genius, unpolished indeed, either by learning or knowledge of polite life, but making its way to the heart by strokes of nature that perhaps would have been lost, or at least weakened, by the restraints of critical elegance. It is only from the ignorant that we can now have any thing original; every master copies from those that are of established authority, and does not look at the natural object.

"I am now in a very pleasant place, and a fine air, and endeavour to keep up those walking powers which I felt so proud of at S. Lodge, that I was disappointed because you would not admire them. I am within nine miles of my brother John, who yesterday brought my niece to see me. I was in hopes to have gone to them at Meonstoke in a fortnight, but fear I must stay longer here, though nature draws me strongly to my own. I long for a history of all your travels and adventures since I saw you, and a very particular description

of all that relates to the friends you are with; characters so interesting that one wishes to be acquainted with their very pigsty. They are indeed respectable in the proper use of the word; which I agree with you is very ill applied to the Abbé Reynal, unless confined to his abilities merely, exclusive of the use he makes of them. And even his understanding is so clouded by vanity and coxcombicality, that it often excites my laughter instead of my admiration. In his pathetic rhapsodies in praise of incontinence, and in reverence of the blessed institution of a public brothel adjoining to the Temple, he is most truly ridiculous, as well as immoral. I abhor, as much as he can do, that gloomy superstition which would strip life of its sweetest comforts and dearest charities. I have as high honour and reverence for the institution of marriage as Milton has, but how that of promiscuous prostitution can redound to the glory of God, or the good of mankind, it belongs to French philosophy to point out."

LETTER LX.

Wardour Street, November, 1782.

"I HAVE read through the three volumes of Trembley that you were so good as to lend me, which I found to be no small undertaking. He is a very verbose writer, and the manner of divid-

ing his work into discourses occasions endless recapitulations and repetitions. If it were shorter and more simple, (for I must own I think it has more eloquence than does it good) it would be a very good book for the purpose designed; that of instructing young people, with whom difficulties are not to be supposed, or may be glossed over easily; but I cannot say it answered my purposes, or threw any new light upon my mind. I am pleased with the temper of the man, and the benevolence and moderation of his principles; but, like all rationalists, he gives the sense he thinks most reasonable, let the words of Scripture be ever so refractory. Every sect of Christians may find texts that suit them; and none of them trouble themselves about making the said texts agree with each other: however, the moral precepts, thank God, are plain enough, and if I could but live up to them, I should not fear to have incurred any guilt by the unavoidable suggestions of the very imperfect reason God has given me, and should hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, though all the priests, or even apostles, that ever lived should anathematise me. Trembley is not one of those that are inclined to do so, but lays the stress where it ought to be laid, on the genuine merits of christianity, charity, and good living.

"Pray, my dear Mrs. Carter, have you read Cecilia? I do not remember to have heard your opinion of it, but I find with great pleasure that Mrs. Montagu (who was not very favourable to Evelina) is warm in her commendations of this book. I am fond of Miss Burney, and delighted with her works. There was one charm in Evelina, which to me surpassed even every thing in Cecilia; this was the just and natural picture of the purest and most elegant love. Lord Orville and Evelina are lovers after my own heart. Mrs. Montagu, *entre nous*, is an ignoramus on this subject, as I have observed on many occasions, nor are you quite an adept. It is the only subject in the world of which I think myself a better judge than either of you. The morality of both works is uncommonly perfect, and shews an admirable rectitude of mind in the writer. There is in Cecilia much useful satire, much entertainment, and a force of pathos that was really too much for me. Perhaps there is too great a number of characters, but most of them are surprisingly well drawn, and kept up with admirable consistency. But I did not mean to say so much of my own opinion, when I only wanted to know yours. I have begun to dip into poor Rousseau's posthumous works, which are most melancholy reading, as they shew the most evident madness, and that of the most miserable and afflicting kind: he believed all Europe

in a combination against him, and that the plots of his enemies had rendered him so much the contempt and abhorrence of mankind, that the very beggars would throw his alms in his face. In the midst of this distraction he often writes finely. His imagination, which tortured him with so many unreal evils, made him, however, some amends, by transporting him, whenever he was alone, into an ideal world, where he made for himself such a society as he liked, and found all those blessings this world denied him. The liveliness of his fancy made these reveries a real happiness, which he says he enjoyed four or five hours in every day. I hope they do not infer madness, for I own this is one of my resources when the world refuses me materials for that happiness which my nature incessantly desires; but I dare not deliver myself up to it as entirely as he did, lest it should disqualify me for real life."

LETTER LXI.

London, June, 1783.

"I HAD yesterday the pleasure of seeing Mrs. D—— better, though still lame, and Dr. D—— pretty well recovered. I am concerned to think of the distress they must have been in when both so ill at the same time. What sad sufferers they are in their health! and how continually is

human happiness defeated by the infirmities of the body. I am persuaded there must be something very wrong and unnatural in the method of living in civilized countries; for it could never be the original nature of the animal man to be so perpetually infested by disease. Perhaps we ought not to have eat animal food; and perhaps all that contributes to cultivate our finer sensations, and even all that adorns and ennobles our minds, may tend to render our bodies delicate and liable to perpetual injury. Somebody was observing, t'other day, that love was of modern invention, and that no such thing existed in Homer's time. Nervous complaints, I dare say, came into fashion with love, and brought a great many more painful feelings in their train. However, I am better pleased to have been all my life a sufferer from them, than to have been carrying stinking seal, with a blanket skewered round me, into the woods after some lordly savage, perfectly unacquainted with the fashion of love or conversation."

LETTER LXII.

June, 1784.

"You were very good, my dear Mrs. Carter, to favour me with a letter so early; and upon the whole the account it brought me was as satisfactory as I could expect. I should have thanked

you for it sooner but that I have been very much indisposed this last fortnight. A bad cold brought back my cough and low fever, with the addition of a sore throat. The dejection of spirits which attended the low fever is by much the worst part of the disorder; and you well know that one symptom of it is a perfect listlessness and disinclination to set about any employment that can be omitted. I am better, but still far from well; however I have just enough power of exertion to resolve that I will no longer appear ungrateful to your kind attention. I do not expect to get rid of my complaints whilst this watery solstice continues. Sunshine is essential to my well being, and when to that is added country air, I flatter myself I shall be restored to my common state of health, which, I bless God, is such as affords me many enjoyments. I am sorry for your poor friend Mrs. ——; such imaginary distempers are real miseries, and not the less to be pitied for not shortening a life which they render perfectly uncomfortable. I think there is hardly a stronger argument for a future state of retribution, than may be drawn from the existence of those complaints which affect the mind as well as the body, and in which reason and virtue are utterly incapable of giving support or comfort. Our enjoyments in this world seem to depend more on animal spirits than on principle or right conduct; and a wicked man,

with high health and spirits, shall laugh through the day, whilst an innocent and pious mind is drooping under the heaviest dejection, and more alarmed by mere human frailties, than the first is by shocking crimes. The consequence I draw from this is highly consolatory and delightful, for 'That which God delights in must be happy.'

"I have not been able to wait on Mrs. ——, who, I suppose, has now left London some days. I am sorry to hear that she is uneasy on account of her amiable friend, Miss ——, who, it seems, is about to commit the heinous sin of marrying a clergyman that has only a small living. As you know my way of thinking on such subjects, you will not suspect me of condemning her. The situation she was in with Mrs. ——, is, of all others, the least favourable to matrimony. Men of small pretensions would not look up to her, and men of great ones would look above her. In effect the experiment has been tried for ten years, and every year makes the chance considerably worse. What then was more natural, or indeed more reasonable, than to lower her views, and accept a man she likes, a gentleman and a man of character, (for this I presume is the case, as I have heard nothing suggested to the contrary), with the prospect of living on a narrow income? And what have her friends to do on the occasion but to assist her as far as they can, to make out

a reasonable competence? I hope Mrs. ——'s displeasure will not affect her intentions of benefiting her adopted daughter; for had she been her real daughter, at her time of life, it can hardly be disputed that she had a right to judge for herself, and has not forfeited any claim to kindness by seeking her own happiness in a lawful, and (in rank and education) not unsuitable marriage.

LETTER LXIII.

London, November, 1797.

"I HAVE been returned to town about a fortnight, after spending two months with my friend Mrs. Ogle, at the Deanery of Winchester. I could not there reckon myself in the country, which I enjoyed only during the few weeks I was at Hadley. But never was a summer and autumn in which one had so little reason to regret being surrounded with brick and tile; and my good friend carried me an airing every tolerable day, which helped my health, though I cannot boast of it much. I brought a bad cold with me to town, which the fogs and cold will not suffer to get well. Otherwise I think my general health is better than it was some months ago, and indeed as well as I ought to expect, considering that with

so many complaints I have attained the age of man.

"It was a great pleasure to me to receive a comfortable account from yourself, which has since been confirmed to me from different hands; amongst the rest from Mrs. J. Pitt, whom I had the pleasure of seeing at Winchester. She was esteemed a great acquisition to that town, where I hope, for the sake of my friends there, she means to return; but she left it before I did. She is still lovely, in person as in mind.

"I had great satisfaction in seeing my darling niece established in the happiest manner at Winchester with a husband who seems in every respect calculated to make her happy. My younger niece was on a visit to Mrs. Ogle the whole time I was there, and we travelled to London together. I found her in poor health and bad spirits; for the loss of her brother* affected her so deeply that I almost feared she would sink under it. And it was long before she regained any degree of cheerfulness; but I bless God she is now recovered in health, and much mended in spirits.

"I was pleased to hear that you, as well as my dear Mrs. Burrows, were able to pursue the pleasant and healthful employment of a gardener. She worked very hard whilst I was with her, and

* Captain William Mulso, Royal Navy, who was lost in the Hermes sloop, with all his crew, January, 1797.

though she cannot do the same in this season, she assures me she has preserved a good share of health through all the bad weather. I was also well pleased that you were no longer reduced to seek amusement only in novels. I have surfeited upon them and am 'supt full of horrors.' Can you tell me of something rather more rational without being too deep for a feeble brain? I suppose you have read (for every body has) 'Pursuits of Literature;' and have felt the same indignation I did at the author, for making a she dog of Mrs. Montagu. And the same contempt for his taste, his spleen, envy, and nonsense, in that line which displays them all.

'Her yelp, though feeble, and her sandals blue.'

"A she dog in sandals is not more absurd than a feeble yelp applied to one of the ablest as well as most ingenious criticisms that ever was written. Indisposed as I was against the author, by this and some other instances of ill nature, I cannot but acknowledge that some of his notes and prefaces testify a laudable zeal on the right side both in politics and religion, which should mollify our resentment against his scurrility and indecency. Poor Doctor Warton is severely dealt with: how far he deserves it I know not, for I have not seen his last publication, but should be grieved if he had disgraced his later years by any thing like what this coarse satirist alleges. I suppose

Printed by T. B. Wait & Co.
Boston.

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TO MRS. MONTAGU.

MADAM,

I BELIEVE you are persuaded that I never entertained a thought of appearing in public, when the desire of being useful to one dear child, in whom I take the tenderest interest, induced me to write the following Letters: perhaps it was the partiality of friendship, which so far biassed your judgment as to make you think them capable of being more extensively useful, and warmly to recommend the publication of them. Though this partiality could alone prevent your judgment from being considered as decisive in favour of the work, it is more flattering to the writer than any literary fame; if, however, you will allow me to add, that some strokes of your elegant pen have corrected these Letters, I may hope, they will be received with an attention, which will ensure a candid judgment from the reader, and perhaps will enable them

to make some useful impressions on those, to whom they are now particularly offered.

They only, who know how your hours are employed, and of what important value they are to the good and happiness of individuals, as well as to the delight and improvement of the public, can justly estimate my obligation to you for the time and consideration you have bestowed on this little work. As *you* have drawn it forth, I may claim a sort of right to the ornament and protection of your name, and to the privilege of publicly professing myself, with the highest esteem,

Madam,

Your much obliged friend

And most obedient

Humble servant,

HESTER CHAPONE.

THE

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. CHAPONE.

ALTHOUGH it would have been useless to interrupt the course of the letters with which the first volume concludes, by introducing any part of the narrative, it is requisite to go so far back as to repeat that Mrs. Chapone, after her father's death, continued to reside in lodgings in London, but spent much of her time in visits to her friends. Of these she had an extensive and respectable circle, among persons of distinguished characters of both sexes; for neither the narrowness of her income, nor the retirement of her abode, could conceal that store of attractions which made her acquaintance sought after by all ranks of society.

The greater portion of her time was for some years passed at the two episcopal houses of her uncle, then bishop of Winchester, at Farnham Castle, and at Winchester House, Chelsea. She was warmly attached both to him and to her aunt, Mrs. Thomas, who was particularly partial to her, and whose affectionate kindness proved an essential source of comfort to her.

With her eldest brother, who always resided in London, and whose strength of mind and benevolence of heart supported, while they soothed her, she lived in habits of constant intercourse, and the most cordial reciprocal affection. Indeed, though blessed with so many other chosen and valuable connexions, he seems to have been her strongest tie to this world.

The houses of her invariable friends Mr. Burrows, with his wife and two younger sisters and of his eldest sister, who was then married to Culling Smith, Esq.* afforded her each a frequent and favourite asylum, and she regarded the hours spent with them among the most delightful of her life.

In 1766 she went into Yorkshire, and remained several months at the parsonage house of her second brother,† at Thornhill, near Wakefield, where she contracted that partiality for her niece, his eldest daughter, to which the world was afterwards indebted for her admirable letters on the improvement of the mind.

In 1770 she accompanied Mrs. Montagu, who had long honoured her with her friendship, into Scotland, a tour from which she derived considerable pleasure and amusement, particularly so

* Now Sir Culling Smith, Bart.

† He married the daughter of William Young, Esq. of the county of Devon.

from a visit they paid on their road at Hagley, the seat of the celebrated Lord Lyttelton, where beauty of scenery, blended with ingenious and elegant conversation, mutually contributed to afford her those high gratifications, which her natural taste for both rendered her so capable of enjoying.

In 1772 she wrote the letters on the improvement of the mind, which, though solely intended for the private instruction of her favourite niece, she was induced, by the urgent entreaties of Mrs. Montagu, and the rest of her literary friends, to publish the year following.

The universal admiration these letters excited was sufficiently apparent by the rapidity of their sale, and brought Mrs. Chapone into that public notice which she little coveted. Numerous were the applications for the acquaintance of the author of such a work, and there were some, who, understanding her circumstances were not affluent, hoped to obtain her assistance in the instruction of their families: but to proposals of this nature she never would listen.

The persuasions of her partial friends, who joined in requesting her to give to the world some farther productions of her pen, induced her, a year or two afterwards, to print the little volume of miscellanies, which, though allowedly inferior to her first publication, contains many

specimens of the ingenuity and elegance of her mind.

At the end of the year 1778, she was deprived of her excellent aunt Mrs. Thomas; and in May, 1781, the venerable bishop was also taken from his family, at the age of 86. The loss of such near and kind relations was grievous to her, though essentially supplied by the friendship of their three daughters, the eldest, the wife of the late Dr. Ogle, Dean of Winchester; the second, of the late Dr Buller, Bishop of Exeter; and the youngest, of the present Admiral Sir Chaloner Ogle.

With these three sisters, of whom Mrs. Ogle only now survives, she kept up a constant affectionate intercourse, and was a frequent, and always welcome visitor at their respective houses.

The calm which Mrs. Chapone had for some years enjoyed, was now to be fatally interrupted. Sorrow again reached her, and fell with heavy and repeated strokes upon her.

The death of the bishop was succeeded the year following by that of her youngest brother, Edward, of whom she was passionately fond, and whose death, being sudden, and totally unexpected, was a blow she was little prepared to sustain.

This gentleman, well known to the musical world, and who was many years president of the anacreontic society, had qualities that endeared

him, not only to his own family and connections, but to all with whom he was upon any terms of intimacy. To a feeling and excellent heart, and cheerful temper, he joined such powers of entertainment from the originality of his humour, and the versatility and vivacity of his conversation, "Of infinite jest," "of most excellent fancy:" whose "flashes of merriment were wont to set the table in a roar," that it was unanimously allowed, by those who had been the companions of his social hours, that when he was gone, society was deprived of one of its most agreeable ornaments.

Death now began to make rapid havock amongst Mrs. Chapone's dearest and most valued friends. Not long after the loss of this brother, she had to lament that of her beloved Mrs. Smith, who was followed by another sister, Mrs. Elizabeth Burrows. In the course of a few years more, Mr. Burrows, and afterwards his widow, were taken from her, and out of that amiable and happy circle, with whom she delighted to associate, and on whom she relied as the sources of her most refined enjoyments, only one sister, the present Mrs. Amy Burrows, remained to bestow on her that heart-felt consolation, which this inestimable friend never failed to administer.

Mrs. Chapone from this time spent her summer almost always in Hampshire, at the houses

of her second brother, and of the three sisters before-mentioned, who were all settled in that county.

She paid occasional visits also at the country seat of Mr. Smith, who proved his regard for his departed wife, by the respect and kindness with which he invariably treated her friend; and his daughters strove, by every mark of endearing attention, to supply to her the place of their excellent mother.*

In September, 1791, she lost her brother John, who died at his prebendal house at Winchester, having survived his wife one year.

On the character of this brother the writer of these pages attempts not to expatiate. The pen must not always obey the dictates of the heart. Suffice it, that his genius, his captivating manners, his admirable discharge of the duties of his profession, still live in the remembrance of many. Those readers to whom he was unknown, will not pay the tribute of a sigh to his memory;—those who did know him, will hardly forbear it.

It might be supposed, that such a succession of severe afflictions would have overpowered so delicate a constitution as Mrs. Chapone's had always been; but in proportion as her trials

* The reader will join in lamenting that these amiable young ladies were both afterwards taken from the world in the bloom of youth.

increased, her mind seemed to gain additional strength. Though her nerves were injured, and her peace broken, by the many shocks they had sustained, her fortitude remained unsubdued. Unrepining resignation to inevitable evils, she considered as the duty of a christian, and what she considered as a duty, she never shrank from performing.

Those solid principles which taught her implicitly to believe in a reunion with those she loved, in a better world, made her long rise superior to the calamities of this, and she "mourned not as those that have no hope."

Her natural vivacity never forsook her, and while her heart was lacerated by her own sorrows, she could, from the cheerfulness of her conversation, as well as by the tenderness of her sympathy, lighten those of her friends.

The four children of the last mentioned brother, Mrs. Chapone loved as, and always called, her own. They were the last remaining branch of the formerly numerous and prosperous family of which she was a member, and she regarded them as the props that might yet sustain a once flourishing edifice from falling into total decay. This idea has not been permitted to be realized!

Her eldest niece still continued the darling of her heart, though her kindness and solicitous

concern for their welfare was equally shared by them all.

It was not only by the brilliancy of her conversation that Mrs. Chapone could amuse those with whom she associated. Any apt occasion that presented itself would call forth the powers of her pen, and she would, with a vein of infinite humour, peculiar to herself, both in prose and verse, describe ludicrous occurrences, or rally foibles that she thought not important enough to require more serious admonitions. Though these were generally too local or too personal to be presented to the public, they afforded such a source of entertainment to those who shared in the perusal of them, as served to enhance the value of her society.

We are indebted to the family of Mr. Burrows for permission to insert a sonnet addressed to him, by Mrs. Chapone, on his growing fond of whist.

FROM MRS. CHAPONE TO MR. BURROWS.

Burrows, whose various pow'rs secure to charm
In verse or prose, with satire or with praise,
With truths sublime the ductile heart can raise,
Melt with affection, with devotion warm;

Or, if thy genius choose the comic form,
With humour quaint, or wit's unlooked for blaze
Can strike our fancies in a thousand ways
Till peals of laughter thicken to a storm.

Ah, why should whist the social hour engage,
Whilst yet the current of thy wit runs clear?
For honour's sake leave to some future year
The sad resource of dulness and of age.

Nor till thy sprightly converse please no more,
With solemn face on painted paper pore!

The following lines, composed in the night, some years ago, on not being able to sleep, will perhaps not be thought an unacceptable witness of the genuine sprightliness of her turn of mind.

In vain I close my weary lids,
Some envious power all sleep forbids.
Why must I endless vigils keep?
I'm sure I never "murder'd sleep,"
But nurs'd it with indulgence kind
By writing—"letters on the mind."
No air-drawn daggers scare my soul,
Nor blood-stain'd hand, nor poison'd bowl;
No injur'd orphans haunt my bed,
Nor demons hover round my head—
Hold—There, perhaps, I say too much;
For aught I know there may be such:
Since Baxter tells us, little devils
Are mighty busy in our evils,
And if in dreams 'tis they perplex us,
Awake too they may choose to vex us.

Some spiteful imp now takes the pains
To jingle rhymes about my brains,

And forces me in verse to think,
Resolv'd I shall not sleep a wink.
Ideas of each motley kind
He brings to throng my helpless mind;
Fancy unable to dispose'em,
In heaps, with wild confusion throws'em
While reason hates the rabble rout,
And struggles hard to turn them out,
Well knowing 'twere a wiser way
To see such company by day.

Come, gentle sleep, in vain I cry,
In vain each soothing posture try!
Come, hush'd repose, by silence brought,
Come, happy vacancy of thought!
In vain with stupifying art
I con old poems got by heart;
Or count an hundred o'er and o'er
Or tell some story heard of yore
From **** fifty times or more.

Now undulating to my ear,
The distant Paul's deep tones I hear:
And now again the watchmen roar,
And bang their clubs against the door.
Ah! cease ye thoughts my brains to crowd,
Ye watchmen bellow not so loud!
For now methinks a gentle shade
O'er fancy's colouring is laid.
Dim and more dim the visions fly,
That glide before the mental eye;

In spite of demons and their whims
A stillness creeps o'er all my limbs.
I sink—I doze—when all things fail'd,
My own dull verses have prevail'd!

[*Sleeps.*]

It is hoped the ingenious and elegant authors of the sonnets alluded to in the lines which follow, will not be offended that this unaffected tribute to their merits, from Mrs. Chapone, should be made public, though the sanguineness of her own disposition forbade her to acquiesce in the sentiment of despending melancholy that poets in general seem to think it necessary a sonnet should always convey.*

ON READING SONNETS BY MRS. CHARLOTTE SMITH, AND BY THE REVEREND MR. BOWLES.

In yon lone copse the moaning stock-dove dwells,
One plaintive note unvaried sorrow tells.
So Smith and Bowles whom kindred woes inspire,
Still in one key attune the dulcet lyre.
Ah thankless mourners! whom the muse has grac'd
With vivid fancy, elegance, and taste;
Was it for this her glowing tints she lent,
Her "words that burn," her epithets that paint?
Shall he who ranges free from clime to clime,
Form'd to enjoy the beauteous and sublime,

* Since this was written the world has been deprived of Mrs. Charlotte Smith.

Who views with rapture Nature's varied form,
While new ideas kindling fancy warm,
"In a fine frenzy roll'd," whose piercing eye,
"Glancing from earth to heav'n," pervades the sky,
Shall he, in earth or heav'n no object find,
To chase the gloom that overclouds his mind?

Can she, who owns a mother's tender ties,
While on a blooming race she casts her eyes,
Confess no tear but that of grief alone,
Nor feel with transport these are all her own?
Ah thankless mourners! cease the melting strain,
Nor think such notes giv'n only to complain!
Sweet poesy, design'd high heav'n to praise,
To loftiest themes her charming voice should raise.
No more let weak complaints that heav'n accuse,
Which * touch'd for finer ends the fine wrought
Muse.
While meaner minds o'er earth's short woes repine,
Poets like these the seraph's song should join;
Bright hope and grateful joy their notes inspire,
"And wake to ecstasy the living lyre."

MRS. CHAPONE was equally the companion of the young and the old. Whilst she alleviated the sufferings or aided the infirmities of the one, she entered with cheerfulness and interest into the pleasures and pursuits of the other. Even those

* Spirits are not finely touch'd
But to fine issues. *Shakespeare.*

little vexatious accidents of life, shared in common by us all, she had the art of frequently turning into pleasantry; and what by an impatient and discontented mind would have been considered as a misfortune, she would happily contrive to convert into a diversion.

The autumns of 1797 and 1798 she spent at the deanery at Winchester, where, besides the gratification she always experienced from the company and kindness of the admirable friend she there visited, she had the supreme satisfaction of seeing her favourite niece very happily settled, with a worthy and excellent husband, the Rev. Benjamin Jeffreys, who was a fellow of the college in that city. The last of these visits was rendered peculiarly agreeable to her, by having the addition of her beloved brother to partake in her pleasure, as he at the same time passed some weeks at the house of his niece.

This was the last season of enjoyment that Mrs. Chapone was blest with. Afflictions now approached her, that even her constancy was not proof against. In the beginning of February, 1799, this dear brother, her constant companion, friend, and protector, was seized with an unexpected and violent disorder, of which he died, after a fortnight's severe suffering.

This was a calamity Mrs. Chapone had never calculated upon. Though some years older than

herself. Mr. Mulso had always enjoyed so much better health, and appeared so likely to attain a vigorous old age, that she had never allowed herself to contemplate the prospect of surviving him.

The world now contained but little to attach her to it, London nothing; but the same laudable resolution thankfully to cherish the few blessings still within her reach, that was the guide of all her actions, made her determine upon settling at Winchester. There she hoped that the attentions of her niece, the unalterable friendship of Mrs. Ogle, and the society of several families, by whom she was equally respected and admired, might in some measure contribute to brighten again the overclouded evening of her days, and cause the short remainder of her life to pass in tolerable ease and comfort. She, however, awaited the approaching confinement of her niece, before she finally arranged this plan, and that was destined to put an end to it for ever; for this amiable child of her affections, this last treasure she possessed, was also torn from her, after giving birth to a dead child, the March following.

This event, together with the removal of the dean and Mrs. Ogle to their family seat in Northumberland, made her relinquish all thoughts of a residence at Winchester, and she meekly submitted to remain in her cheerless lodgings in London.

Her piety and her patience were still unshaken, but her mind yielded to the effects of these severe shocks. "Reason tottered on her seat." Her memory became visibly and materially impaired, and her body was so much affected by the sufferings of her mind, that she soon sank into a state of alarming debility.

Thus miserably circumstanced, she had still however the grateful consolation to find that the respectable circle of friends with whom she had been used to associate, and who remembered the pleasure her shining talents had formerly afforded them, forsook her not now when their lustre was faded.

Lest the generous feelings of the several benevolent persons who still live should be wounded by having their names made public, we are induced to suppress an honourable list of sympathizing friends, who voluntarily came forward to relieve the infirmities, and soften the calamity of this revered member of their society.

The most strenuous endeavours were exerted to render her situation less deplorable. As the increased expenses of the times gave room to apprehend she might have difficulties of another nature to encounter, even pecuniary aid was not withheld, and the most delicately offered contributions, prevented her feeling sensible of this additional source of distress.

Mrs. Chapone never could endure the thoughts of having a companion, who was to be paid for her attentions to her, and therefore it was judged expedient that she and her youngest niece should live together. This niece, who felt conscious of her incapacity solely to supply to her aunt the place of those she had been deprived of, proposed their quitting London, and residing at Hadley, where the nearness to Mrs. Chapone's invaluable friend Mrs. Amy Burrows, who had retired thither some years before, offered a pleasing hope that one ray of happiness might be restored to the unrepining sufferer.

This plan Mrs. Chapone gladly acquiesced in, and even seemed to dwell with some delight on the prospect of comfort it presented to her, and accordingly she and her niece settled there in the autumn of 1800.

Here, upon her first arrival, the united efforts of Mrs. Burrows, and her niece, the only daughter of Mr. Burrows; of Mr. Cottrell and his family; with several other kind neighbours, succeeded in sometimes procuring Mrs. Chapone a few hours of enjoyment; but they were of short duration, for her infirmities increased so fast, that she was never able to go down stairs above three or four times after she took possession of her house.

Though she daily grew weaker both in body and mind, yet her general health, with the excep-

tion of one or two attacks, was rather improved than injured, and she had fewer complaints during the last year of her life, than had probably fallen to her share in any preceding part of it.

No deprivation of intellect, no failure of her powers of entertainment, could diminish the firm and long-tried friendship of Mrs. Burrows; she and Miss Burrows were her constant visitors, and while they surveyed, with compassion and humiliation, the awful lesson to human nature, which the wreck of so bright an ornament of it presented, they omitted no opportunity to administer every soothing means of relief she was then capable of experiencing.

Though at times she was so lost as to be unconscious of the presence of her friends, at others nature seemed to revive within her, and she would occasionally astonish them, with even brilliant sallies of her genuine vivacity.

In October 1801, Mrs. Chapone completed her 74th year. On the christmas day following, without any previous illness, having declared herself unusually well the day before, she fell into a doze from which nothing could arouse her, and which the medical gentleman who attended her immediately pronounced to be the forerunner of death; and at eight o'clock in the evening, without one apparent struggle or sigh, she breathed her last in the arms of her neice, still attended by her unremitting friend Mrs. Burrows.

Such was the life, and such the end of Mrs. Chapone. If her character be not sufficiently made known by what has been recounted of her, it would be frivolous to attempt a farther delineation of it here. There has been no design to present a "faultless monster" to the world. It is not pretended that she was free from failings, for she was a human creature; but they would be recorded with an ill grace by those who so well remember how few they were in comparison with her virtues, and how constantly they were checked by a religious sense of duty, and by a benevolent wish to live in charity and good will with all her fellow creatures. Humility was a prominent feature in her character; she was so thankful for any good offices that were rendered her, that nothing offended her so much as calling the world wicked and ungrateful. She always insisted upon it, that there was a much greater portion of good than evil in it, and frequently observed, "If it were not the best natured of all worlds, I should not have received so much kindness as I have done in it."

Of embellishment or exaggerated praise these memoirs may be acquitted, but if the pen of affection has been too diffuse, it is hoped that the candour of those who give themselves the trouble to peruse it, will prompt them to consider the error as pardonable.

Kind reader, there now survive but few who could boast an alliance with Mrs. Chapone, and if you would hereafter entitle yourself to the same veneration, and fond attachment to your memory from those you leave behind you, that her merits and amiable qualities have obtained for her, "*Go and do thou likewise!*"

FIRST LETTER

ON

FILIAL OBEDIENCE.

BY MISS MULSO.

TO MR. RICHARDSON.

Friday, October 12, 1750.

YOUR reproach, dear sir, of having so soon left you off as a correspondent, sits heavy upon my heart; and the more so, because you might reasonably have expected that I should have written to you from Hampton, as you so kindly desired. I came from thence but yesterday, and often wished, while I was there, for one half hour to myself, which I would have employed in writing to you. But it could not be; the business there was to laugh, to sing, and to dance; and I was not allowed to be enough a rational creature to converse with Mr. Richardson. However, don't think me quite lost in dissipation: I am now returned home, and settled, I hope, for the winter; and returned with the same taste for reasonable pleasures that I went out with, and shall find the same delight in your conversation, whenever you will favour me with it, as I did when I was so happy at North-End. You must not deny me your company here the first day next week that you are at leisure, and we must then fix on some day for me to wait on your amiable friend Miss Highmore. I am sure you will not refuse to meet me there. Do, good sir, send me word when I may see you, and let it be on a day when

your evening is unengaged. Miss Prescott has desired me not to neglect the proposal you made to me of telling you in writing my sentiments on the subject we touched on at North-End, of filial duty and parental authority. She thinks with me, that to engage you to an explanation of your notions on this, as well as on all other important subjects, cannot but be highly advantageous and improving to her and me; and it is with this view that I am contented to expose my opinions to you, in order to have them rectified by you. And you have given me leave to oppose my weak arguments to yours, till I can bring my reason to give its free assent to your opinion. I will therefore venture to give you my sentiments, though it is highly probable that they will suffer by my manner of representing them.

I suppose that parental authority, like all other authority of one creature over another, is designed to promote the happiness and good of the person who is to submit to it; at least, that this is the principal end of its institution.

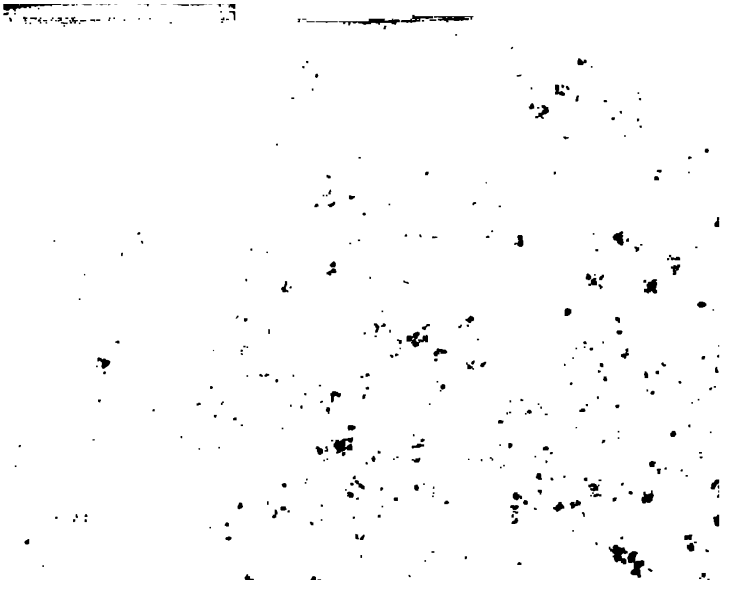
A king is vested with power over his subjects, that he may maintain order amongst them, and provide for their safety and welfare. Parents have a natural authority over their children, that they may guide their steps during their infancy and youth, whilst their reason is too weak to be trusted with the direction of their own actions.

But though this motive to obedience ceases when the children are grown up, and endued, as it may happen, with stronger reason than their parents; yet, then, love and gratitude take place, and oblige them to the same observance and submission to the will of their parents, in all cases except where a higher duty interferes, or where the sacrifice they are expected to make is greater than any degree of gratitude can require. For though gratitude may demand that those who, under God, were the authors of my life, and who provided for its support when I was incapable of doing it myself, should have a proper control over me, and that in all reasonable instances my will should submit to theirs; yet you must allow that to suffer me to live, yet bid me destroy all the peace and happiness of my life, is to exact a much harder obedience, an obedience which no human creature can have a right to exact from another. Yet this was not all that was exacted from Clarissa by her father and family. She was not only commanded to sacrifice her happiness but her innocence: the marriage they would have forced her to, would not only have plunged her into misery but guilt; a guilt no less black than that of solemn perjury before the altar of God. Can it then be made a doubt whether she had a natural right to refuse her obedience in this case, and, when brutal force was designed, to use every method

her own prudence could suggest to get out of their power. Had she not a right to disclaim an authority which was made use of, not according to its true end, to promote her happiness, but to make her miserable? Not to lead her to good, but to drag her to sin and perdition? If then what she did was just and reasonable, why is she represented as continually afflicting her soul with remorse and fear, on account of this one action of self-defence, and suffering as much horror and dread from her father's diabolical curse, as if he had really the power of disposing of her happiness in the next world as well as in this? Why is Clarissa, who is drawn as a woman of so good an understanding, and who reasons so justly on all other subjects, to be so superstitious and weak in her apprehensions of parental authority? She is so fettered by prejudice that she does not allow her reason to examine how far her conduct is to be justified or blamed; but implicitly joins with her father to condemn herself, when neither reason nor religion condemn her. Does not this, in some measure, call in question the foundation of her other virtues, which, if not grounded on reason, but on blind prejudice and superstition, lose all their value? The enemies of virtue are too ready to accuse its followers of superstition, of laying themselves under restraints, which God and Nature never imposed on them. I would

therefore have those characters, which are drawn as patterns of virtue, keep clear of superstition; and shew that the precepts of religion are most agreeable to reason and nature, and productive of our happiness, even in this world. Will you forgive me, dear sir, for making this objection to a character which is otherwise unexceptionable, and which is calculated to promote religion and virtue more than any fiction that ever appeared in the world? I dare say that you will be able to convince me that I have considered this part of the character in a wrong light; at least, if you take the pains to try, you will convince me that you do not think my opinion below your notice, and that you have more regard for me than I can any way deserve, but by the sincere esteem and affectionate value, with which I am, good Mr. Richardson's obliged humble servant,

HESTER MULSO.



SECOND LETTER

ON

FILIAL OBEDIENCE.

BY MISS MULSO.

TO MR. RICHARDSON.

November 10, 1750.

How much my heart thanks you for all the trouble you have taken with me, my most kind friend! my excellent instructer! I have no words that can express. I am ashamed to think how much time I have cost you; may but my mind be as much bettered as it has been delighted by your last letter, and then, my dear Mr. Richardson will not think his labour thrown away, even on me.

But yet, believe me, I am not a little distressed how to answer you. To urge fresh arguments against yours, will be to give you fresh trouble, and will, I fear, make you almost despair of doing any good to so obstinate, so tenacious a girl. Yet, my dear sir, you know I prepared you to expect to find me very slow in apprehending truths, which I had not been used to receive as such; and you gave me leave to own myself not convinced, even after you had taken the pains to explain and enforce your opinion. I would fain flatter myself, that this is not owing to obstinacy in my temper; that my mind is open to conviction, and wishes for truth, and not for victory. But how shall this appear to you? Let it appear as it will,

I dare not be insincere; and to give up the argument without being convinced, would be to defeat the good intentions of my kind correspondent, who can have no other motive to correspond with me at all, but the desire of my improvement, and my good. I will therefore continue to lay open to him all my thoughts; he will I know have patience with my weakness and absurdity; and though he cannot help sometimes shaking his head and crying "Ah, Miss Mulso!" yet he will not do it with too much contempt; he will not *hate* me, even though I should persist in the wrong.

You tell me I argue partially on the side of children. I will not defend myself from this, because partiality is a fault which of all others we are least likely to find out in ourselves: yet this I will say, that I have as little reason to be partial on this subject as any child can have; for it has pleased God to bless me with a parent who has secured my obedience by engaging on his side my tenderest affection, and warmest gratitude; to whom I am bound by all sorts of ties; and from whom I have not the least reason to fear any tyrannous exercise of power, since tyranny is as much a stranger to his nature, as it is contrary to his principles. And however heavy the chains of oppression and slavery might have sat upon me, (I believe there is a rebellious spirit within me, which so tried, would have been apt to break out) yet I hope I am not very untractable to the reins

of a mild and reasonable government. I hope my own heart deceives me not, when it assures me that it is ready to sacrifice much of its own happiness to that of my dear papa; and that it will always acknowledge, by every act of reverence and submission which may not interfere with its first duties, the great debt of gratitude which it must for ever owe him.

Fear not therefore, good sir, that what you think wrong principles should influence my practice in this important branch of duty; and forgive this egotism, which, however impertinent in a general argument, may give some satisfaction to your kind heart, always anxious for the good of others.

You seem so much surprised, nay I fear shocked, at the reason on which I suppose parental authority founded, and at my supposing that there is a time when *that reason* for the child's obedience ceases, that I cannot help fancying that I did not state my opinion in proper terms, or that I have not sufficiently explained it; therefore I beg leave to give it you once more, in the words of Mr. Locke, in that chapter which treats of paternal power in his treatise on government. I do not cite his *authority* to uphold my argument; for no authority less than divine should be urged against reasoning; and if I could have yielded to authority alone, it would have been sufficient for

me to know your opinion, without any arguments at all. My reason for troubling you, as I am going to do, with a very long quotation, is, because the case is better stated, and the arguments more clearly expressed, than they would be, if I gave them you in my own words.

Mr. Locke, after having spoken of "that equal right that every man hath to his natural freedom, without being subjected to the will and authority of any other man," proceeds thus.

"Children I confess are not born IN this full state of equality, though they are born TO it. Their parents have a sort of rule and jurisdiction over them when they come into the world, and for some time after, but it is but a temporary one. The bonds of this subjection, are like the swaddling-cloaths they are wrapt up in, and supported by, in the weakness of their infancy: age and reason, as they grow up, loosen them, till at length they drop quite off, and leave a man at his own free disposal.

"Adam was created a perfect man; his body and mind in full possession of their strength and reason; and so was capable from the first instant of his being, to provide for his own support and preservation, and govern his actions according to the dictates of the law of reason which God had implanted in him. From him the world is peopled with his descendants, who are all born [in-

fants] weak and helpless, without knowledge or understanding. But to supply the defects of this imperfect state till the improvement of growth and age hath removed them, Adam and Eve, and after them all parents, were, by the law of nature, under an obligation to preserve, nourish, and educate the children they had begotten; not as their own workmanship, but the workmanship of their own Maker, the Almighty, to whom they were to be accountable for them.

"The law that was to govern Adam, was the same that was to govern all his posterity, the law of reason. But his offspring having another way of entrance into the world different from him, by a natural birth, that produced them ignorant, and without the use of reason, they were not presently under that law; for nobody can be under a law which is not promulgated to him; and this law being [promulgated, or] made known by the use of reason, [only], he that is not come to the use of his reason, cannot be said to be under this law, and Adam's children, being not presently as soon as born under this law of reason, were not presently free. For law in its true notion, is not so much the *limitation* as the *direction* of a free and intelligent agent *to his proper interest*, and prescribes no farther than is for the general good of those under that law. So that, however it may be mistaken, the end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to

preserve and enlarge freedom; for in all the states of created beings capable of laws, where there is no law there is no freedom. For liberty, is, to be free from restraint and violence from others, which cannot be where there is no law: but freedom is not, as we are told, a liberty for every man to do what he lists; (for who could be free when every other man's humour might domineer over him?) but a liberty to dispose and order as he lists, his person, actions, possessions, and his whole property within the allowance of those laws under which he is, and therein not to be subject to the arbitrary will of another, but freely follow his own.

"The power then that parents have over their children arises from that duty which is incumbent on them to take care of their offspring, during the imperfect state of childhood. To inform the mind and govern the actions of their yet ignorant nonage, till reason shall take its place and ease them of that trouble, is what the children want, and the parents are bound to. For God having given man an understanding to direct his actions, has allowed him a freedom of will, and a liberty of acting, as properly belonging thereunto, within the bounds of that law he is under. But whilst he is in an estate wherein he has not understanding of his own to direct his will, he is not to have any will of his own to follow; he that understands for him must will for him too, [he must

prescribe to his will, and regulate his actions:] But when he comes to the state that made his father a freeman, the son is a freeman too.

"This holds in all the laws a man is under, whether natural or civil. Is a man under the law of nature? What made him free of that law? What gave him a free disposing of his property according to his own will within the compass of that law? I answer a state of maturity, wherein he might be supposed capable to *know that law*, that so he might keep his actions within the bounds of it. When he has acquired that state, he is supposed to know how far that law is to be his guide, and how far he may make use of his freedom; and so comes to have it; till then, somebody else must guide him who is presumed to know how far the law allows a liberty. If such a state of reason, such an age of discretion made him free, the same shall make his son free too." (And if his son, I presume his daughter too; since the duty of a child is equally imposed on both, and since the natural liberty Mr. Locke speaks of arising from reason, it can never be proved that women have not a right to it, unless it can be proved that they are not capable of knowing the law they are under.) "Is a man under the law of England? What made him free of that law? A capacity of knowing that law; which is supposed by that law at the age of twenty-one years: and in some cases sooner. If

this made the father free, it shall make the son free too.

"Thus we are born free, as we are born rational. Not that we have actually the exercise of either; age that brings one brings with it the other too.

"But though" (now, dear sir, comes the distinction, which you call *plausible*, and by which I think some care is taken of the parent's happiness as well as the child's, and by which I am persuaded no parent will suffer, who does not wish for more power than belongs to a mortal.) "But though there be a time when a child comes to be as free from subjection to the will and command of his father, as the father himself is free from subjection to the will of any body else; and they are both under no other restraint than what is common to them both, whether it be the law of nature, or principal law of their country," (or let me add the laws of God, as revealed in scripture) "yet this freedom exempts not a son from that *honour* which he ought by the law of God and nature to pay his parents. God having made the parents instruments in his great design of continuing the race of mankind, and the occasions of life to their children, as he hath laid on them an obligation to nourish, preserve, and bring up their offspring, so he hath laid on the children a perpetual obligation of honouring their parents; which containing in it

an *inward esteem and reverence to be shewn by all outward expressions*, ties up the child from any thing that may ever injure or affront, disturb, or endanger, the happiness or life of those from whom he received his; and engages him in all actions of defence, relief, assistance, and comfort of those by whose means he entered into being, and has been made capable of any enjoyments of life. From *this obligation, no state, no freedom, can absolve children.* But this is very far from giving parents a power of command over their children, or an authority to make laws, and dispose, as they please, of their lives or *liberties.* 'Tis *one thing* to owe *honour, respect, gratitude,* and *assistance, another,* to require an *absolute obedience* and *submission.* The honour due to parents, a monarch in his throne owes his mother, and yet this lessens not his authority, nor subjects him to her government.

"The want of distinguishing these two powers, viz. that which the father hath in the right of tuition during minority, and the right of honour all his life, may perhaps have caused a great part of the mistakes about this matter. For to speak properly of them, the first of these is rather the *privilege of children,* and *duty of parents,* than any prerogative of paternal power. The nourishment and education of their children is a charge so incumbent on parents for their children's good, that nothing can absolve them from taking care

of it. And though the power of commanding and chastizing them go along with it, yet God hath woven into the principles of human nature such a tenderness for their offspring, that there is little fear that parents should use their power with too much rigour. The excess is seldom on the severe side, the strong bias of nature drawing the other way." (This is certainly true in general: but yet there are parents who seem to have none of this tenderness interwoven in their natures, or who have entirely rooted it out of their hearts; an instance of which I know, in the case of a very intimate friend of mine; whose parents I am sure were much less fit to be trusted with the measures of their own authority, than the child with the measures of its obedience. For the *old Yahoos* were a thousand times more wicked and unreasonable, than a little Yahoo could be.) "This is that power to which children are commanded obedience, that the pains and care of their parents may not be increased, or ill rewarded. On the other side, *honour and support*, all that which *gratitude* requires to return for the benefits received by and from them, [See Mr. Richardson!] is the *indispensable duty* of the child, and *proper privilege* of the parents. This is intended for the parent's advantage, as the other is for the child's. Though education, the parent's duty, seems to have most power, because the ignorance

and infirmities of childhood stand in need of restraint and correction, which is a visible exercise of rule; and a kind of dominion; and that duty which is comprehended in the word *honour* requires less obedience, though the obligation be stronger on *grown* than younger children. For who can think the command '*children, obey your parents,*' requires, in a man that has children of his own, the same submission to HIS father, as it does in his yet young children to HIM? And that, by this precept, he were bound to obey all his father's commands, if, out of a conceit of authority, he should have the indiscretion to treat him still as a boy? A man may owe honour and respect to an ancient or wise man, defence to his child or friend, relief and support to the distressed, and gratitude to a benefactor, to such a degree, that all he has, all he can do, cannot sufficiently pay it. But all these give no authority, no right to any one of making laws over him, from whom they are owing; *and 'tis plain all this is* NOT OWING *to the bare title of father, because obligations to parents, and the degrees of what is required of children, may be varied by the different care and kindness, trouble and expense which are often employed upon one child more than another.*"

Whether this doctrine will appear to you in any better light from Mr. Locke's explanation of it, I know not. To me, I must own, it appears high-

ly reasonable, and the objections you have made, do not to me appear strong enough to overthrow it.

You draw the picture of a very selfish ungrateful little villain of a girl, (with more severity on the sex than I expected from *you*) and then conclude with saying that she may justify herself by taking it for granted that "parental authority is designed to promote the happiness and good of the person who is to submit to it, at least that this is the principal end of its institution." So, give me leave to add, are all laws and restrictions; even those which proceed directly from the Deity himself, are manifestly designed to promote the good of mankind in general, and of each individual in particular; and are besides enforced by the promise of future rewards. But does it weaken their authority to say that they are so? Shall I be the less willing to obey, because I know it is my interest, and that obedience is made my duty, *for my own sake?*

You say that you can by no means consent that an indispensable duty should be bartered away for gratitude. Is not gratitude then an indispensable duty? Believe me, it appears so to me; and with regard to our parents, I am ready to allow with Clarissa, that it is a duty anterior to all others, (except those we owe to the Supreme Being) because our obligations to our parents

begin with our birth, and are increasing daily, during our helpless state of infancy, in which we are not capable of making any return to them, not even the small tribute of acknowledgment. It must therefore be the business of our riper years to confess, and, as far as we are able, to return the benefits we have received. And on this I hope I may, without offence, suppose THAT duty founded, which is comprehended in the words, *Honour thy father and mother.* What *I* understand by the word honour, you have already seen in the words of Mr. Locke. "But, say you, how can a child be grateful, who thinks not herself obliged?" If having received the *highest benefits*, life, education, support, and a provision for the rest of her life, (either given or designed her) she thinks not herself obliged, what shall I say to *such a one?* No duty, no obligation can bind her; she either has not a capacity to know the law she is under, and so is not arrived at a state of freedom, or else, knowing it, she defies it; and is in rebellion, not only against her parents, but against her God. If your *little Yahoo* can dare to conclude that "gratitude to her papa and mama she owes none, that *love for them* she has *none, that* being flown to a dearer object;" [How Mr. Richardson! is the human heart capable of loving no more than one object at a time? Did your sweet Pamela love her father and mother

less after she had given her heart and hand to Mr. B. than before?] "and that, in short, she has no motive to regard them;" what have I to do with *such a girl?* Let the *little villain* justify herself as she can, but not by using my words, which I am sure will never serve her purpose.

Clarissa says that at *every age* on this side matrimony, the wings of our parents are our most necessary safeguard, from the vultures, the hawks, &c. Suppose a woman lives single till forty; I fancy by that time the HAWKS, *vultures*, and *kites* will give her very little trouble; and that she might be pretty secure from the danger of being DEVOURED, though she should have the courage to creep from under the wings of her parents. Or suppose a *young* woman left an orphan, (we will, however, suppose her a *woman*, of age to know the law she lives under, and to dispose of her own property,) must she necessarily become the prey of some rapacious animal? and must she *of course* be unhappy, for want of prudence to conduct herself through life? If not, it is plain that there IS an age at which she may be capable of governing her own actions according to the laws of her religion and her country. But you ask me what is to become of those young women who want prudence? Just the same that will become of *men* who want prudence; just what will become of their parents, if *they* should want prudence; they will draw them-

selves into distresses and inconveniences; and this must be the case of *some* of those *many* who never are at *years of discretion.*

You may by this time have guessed what I meant by the words *grown up.* "But at what time," says Hooker, "a man may be said to have attained so far forth the use of reason as sufficeth to make him capable of those laws whereby he is then bound to guide his actions, this is much more easy for sense to discern, than for any one by skill and learning to determine."

But now for the particular case of marriage. Take notice, dear Sir, that I, as well as Clarissa, only insist on a *negative;* and that it never entered into my mind to suppose a child at liberty to dispose of herself in marriage, without the consent of her parents. This *gratitude,* or the *duty of honouring them,* forbids, unless they had first cast her out of their protection, and forced her to seek another guardian. You think I expressed myself too strongly with regard to forced marriages; and perhaps I did; for I always considered marriage in a more solemn light than the generality of people do; and as I think highly of the felicity of the state where it is a marriage of souls as well as persons, so have I a dreadful idea of the misery of being "*joined,* and not *matched.*" But if I have carried these notions too far, surely the absurdity of the generality of parents on the other hand

is still greater; and I did not expect from Mr. Richardson to have heard any excuses, any palliatives for their sordid, base way of thinking. I did not expect to hear from HIM that "daughters many times have reason to wish that they *had been* prevailed on," to give their hands where their hearts refused to be given; or to have heard Colonel Morden cited *as a man of observation*, for the support of that favourite maxim of most parents, but surely *not of Mr. Richardson*, that, however strong your aversion may be to your *lover*, you can't fail of loving your *husband*; as if the ceremony of marriage could alter the nature either of the man or the woman, and remove the natural antipathy between worth and baseness, between good sense and folly, between the grovelling, dirty little soul of a Solmes, and that of the almost divine Clarissa. If the lady's dislike be only to the *person* of the man; if he be a man of sense and worth, and one to whom she can have no other objection, but that his outward form displeases her, I do think such a dislike *may be* overcome, where there is no prepossession in favour of another. Yet even *trivial* as this objection is, in comparison of others which regard the mind, I think it ought to be overcome, if it *can* be overcome, before marriage; and that a woman ought not to trust to a *possibility* of *being able to perform* her solemn vow.

How little likelihood is there, that a man who, with all the assiduity, all the compliance, all the arts which the desire of pleasing inspires him with, whilst a lover, cannot obtain a favourable thought, should at once become amiable in those very eyes which before regarded him with aversion, and dear to that heart which shrunk at his approach, from the moment that he is adorned with the title of *husband!* When from the humble, crawling slave, who dreaded her frown, the mean wretch begins to strut about, full of the sense of his new prerogatives, and puffed up almost to bursting, with the pride of having a creature every way his superior in his *power*, and bound to *obey* him. Oh Sir, you who could paint so well the *man of wisdom* tugging at the leading-strings of his pretty fool, to restrain her from embracing a serpent; paint, I beseech you, the lovely, the wise, the noble, the good Clarissa, not in *leading-strings*, but in *chains;* (for tyranny is the triumph of low minds, and almost the sure consequence of power in the hands of a fool) her hands manacled, her feet fettered down to earth, her head bowed down with shame and dejection of soul, and her face covered with blushes for the ridiculous, comtemptible appearance and behaviour of her husband. Her shoulders heavy laden with her marriage *yoke*, and her agreeable *yoke-fellow* leaving the whole weight of it to her, whilst he affects to look

big, and to put on an air of superiority and command, which increases in proportion to her meekness and readiness to obey; no way for her to oblige him, since he looks on the most painful compliances as *her duty*, and *his due*. The constant *drudgery* of *dissimulation* which she must submit to, in order to behave as she ought, and to *appear* to perform her engagement to *love and honour him*, either effectually deceives him, (and then he plumes himself on her fondness, thinks his irresistible charms have captivated her, and that let him behave as he will, the poor, fond fool cannot help loving him,) or else, if he sees through her struggles to oblige him, and perceives the force she puts upon herself, he has not delicacy enough to be hurt by it, but building on her virtue and conscience, cares not to please her, or to soften her slavery; well knowing that let her hate him as she will, she will still do her duty by him. This is the lot, of which you say that you will not think highly of that woman's prudence, who, after a while, could not reconcile herself tolerably to it; especially if children follow the marriage. Alas! children which are the greatest blessings in a happy marriage, would in this case bring with them fresh grief and mortification to the unhappy mother, who would see them absurdly, if not cruelly treated; and if her husband interfered at all in their education, see their minds poisoned

with the mean notions and bad maxims, as well as by the example of their father; and her own instructions, if she gives them any, must be directly opposite to his. Prudence may enable her to behave with decency and patience in such calamities, but will it prevent her feeling them? Will it restore that *inward* peace and joy, which her implicit obedience has robbed her of? Yet such is the eligible condition in which the wise, the experienced part of the world, take such infinite pains to place their children; such the *Lord* to whom they would sell and enslave the darling of their hearts, for whom they have treasured up their gain, and from whom, as from a rising sun, they expect to have lustre and gladness cast on the winter of their days. Is it possible that experience should produce error, and that the exemption of old people from the passions of youth, should be no better a privilege than to leave room for the love of money, which seems then to engross the whole soul, and to fill up the place of all the other passions! Does the soul (one would be almost tempted to ask) *contract* and *shrivel up* with old age, like the body? And can time wither even virtue?

Don't think me insolently pert upon old people. Believe me, a virtuous and wise old age is the object of my sincerest reverence and highest

esteem. I confess the great advantage which experience gives to a good understanding, and the happy opportunities which that calm season of life allows for the greater progress of virtue, and for a more uninterrupted attention to the duties of religion. I think it is reasonable to suppose, that as it is the grand business of our lives to endeavour to rise by degrees to that state of excellence and happiness which is the ultimate end of our being, he who has made this his vocation, and has spent his life in pressing forward to the prize of his high calling, will be nearer the attainment of perfection in an advanced age, than he who has but begun his race can be, with whatever ardour and diligence he sets out. But yet, my dear Sir, you who have by an amazing strength of thought and penetration, and unwearied observation, gained so much more knowledge of the world, and of the human heart, than the longest life gives to others; whose zeal for doing good, whose benevolence and friendship have all the warmth of youth, though guided by maturest judgment; who have too much real dignity to need to usurp upon our respect, or to exact that deference to your *years* which is due to your wisdom and virtue; *you*, I say, may speak impartially on this subject, and I may tell to you, without fear of offending, my observations on those who claim our acquiescence in all their opinions, from

their superiority of years and experience. And you will shew me where my observations are false, and teach me how to make the best use of those which are true. What shall I think of human nature, and how shall I avoid dreading the continuance of my life, lest, instead of improving, I should be more and more corrupted by the world; more selfish, more ungenerous, more contracted in my views, more earthly in my affections, when I see those who in their youth had hearts capable of delicate sentiments, who were open, generous, sincere, and benevolent, gentle, cheerful, and agreeable in their tempers, innocent in their manners, and unaffected in their piety; when I see these very people, in an advanced age, grown cold to all tender and good affections; close and designing; covetous and mean; insensible to the pains of others, and *slow*, if not *unwilling*, to relieve them; rigid in their precepts, yet self-indulgent, full of reverence for themselves, and of contempt for youth, peevish, imperious, tyrannical, and self-conceited, yet manifestly weak in judgment, and dull of apprehension? I am sure you must have known instances of such who, in the early part of their lives, obtained, and perhaps deserved, the former character, sunk into the sad, the pitiable state I have described, in their last stage. Is it that a long commerce with the world does indeed corrupt the heart; and extinguish by degrees

those sparks of light, those inclinations to good, which were implanted in our minds? Or is it rather to be attributed to the seeds of original evil, which grow with our years, and overspread the whole soul? But though there are some instances of this melancholy change for the worse, there are doubtless many of improvement and reformation; therefore perhaps this observation may be to no purpose here, unless it shews that a superiority of years does not *always* give real superiority; and that parents are *sometimes* the *less* qualified to judge of the real good and happiness of their children for being so much older than they, for having lost the tenderness and sensibility of their *hearts*, without adding much to the strength and capacity of their *heads*.

But I have insensibly wandered from the subject of forced marriages. I must own that I can recede very little from the strength of my expressions on this subject. I can only consent to change the word *misery* into *unhappiness*. I must still say that the marriage Clarissa's parents would have forced her to, would have plunged her into *unhappiness*, &c. *Misery* is perhaps too strong a term for any degree of calamity which can be inflicted on us in this world, for *absolute misery* is inconsistent with a state of mortality, as well as absolute happiness, but I cannot help thinking that a marriage so very unsuitable as that of a Solmes and a Clarissa, generally *disturbs*, if not *destroys* the peace and happiness

of the whole life, and I think it very unlikely that any length of time should produce friendship between two minds that are the very opposites to each other, in opinions, sentiments, and principles; and it is plain that Clarissa thought so too; for she would not have drawn upon herself the anger, and even reprobation of those, she so much honoured and loved, and encountered with so many persecutions, difficulties and distresses, had she believed that, after a while, she could have reconciled herself to Solmes, and have been tolerably happy with him; and that if she *endeavoured* to accomplish her marriage vow, she *should* accomplish it. If this be granted, I think, (after having as you desired perused the matrimonial office, and weighed to the best of my abilities the force of the words) that I shall not have much to retract from my assertion, that a marriage with Solmes would have involved Clarissa in guilt as well as *unhappiness*; a guilt very little, if at all short of *solemn perjury before the altar of God.* You say that the promise of the wife to *love* and *honour* her husband, implies no more than that she will *endeavour* to love and honour him. And though this is *not expressed* in the vow, yet I am willing to grant that, as the inward thoughts and affections of our hearts are not absolutely in our power, as the outward actions by which they are to be shewn are, *best endeavours* only are implied. But if this promise be made with a full persuasion that those

endeavours will be *ineffectual*, and that it will never be in your power to perform what you then promise, what an equivocal salvo is this! If I promise to give to any one an estate which is actually in my own possession, some unforeseen accident may happen to disappoint my intentions and put it out of my power to perform my promise; I may die before it is performed, or he to whom I promise may die; or my estate may be taken from me by violence. Therefore no more can be understood, by any such promise, than that I will do it, if it is in my power. So, if I marry a man, for whom I have a sincere and well grounded love and esteem, that man may afterwards so change his principles and behaviour, as to wear out my love, and put it out of my power to esteem him. But if I, not having one single foot of land, nor the least probability of ever having any, and being fully persuaded in my own mind that I never shall be mistress of any, do nevertheless give a positive promise to bestow an estate on any body, could I quiet my own conscience by saying within myself that I only meant that I *would give it if I could*, and that I would *endeavour* to give it, when I well knew that all my endeavours would never put it in my power? Would not he to whom I made the promise have a right to accuse me of falsehood and breach of promise? And would not God and my own heart join with him to accuse me? And

is it not the same thing if having *no love, no honour,* for the man I marry, at the time, nor any likelihood of ever being able to love and honour him, I nevertheless give a positive promise so to do? *Even the best endeavours only are implied.* I always considered wilful prevarication with as much abhorrence, and rather more contempt, than a downright lie; it is the mean subterfuge of those who would have all the advantage of deceiving, yet save themselves from the danger of it: it is impiously trifling with the great Searcher of hearts, who regards our intentions, and not our words. I must therefore think Clarissa would have been guilty of falsehood, and breach of her vow by marrying Solmes; and as this vow is to be made in so solemn a manner, in the presence and in the name of God, who is called upon by the minister to witness (as well as the company present) to the contract, it is nearly, if not quite, of equal dignity and force with any oath that words can frame; and the breach of it may reasonably enough be called perjury. And *this* is the guilt which I said Clarissa would have been involved in by obeying this command of her parents; for as to any danger which could follow of her breaking the other part of her vow, that of *keeping only to the man she marries, forsaking all other,* it never entered into my thoughts; nor ever could, whilst the woman in my view was a Clarissa, or even one

infinitely short of Clarissa's excellence. Yet this I believe, that being married to a hated object, does by no means secure the heart from a future impression, much less can get the better of one which has taken root before hand; and this, though it does not endanger the *virtue* of a well-principled woman, greatly adds to her *unhappiness*; and though a *prudent woman* would no doubt use her *best endeavours* to avoid or subdue such an impression, yet I am not quite sure that those endeavours will *always succeed*. But enough of this is said; if a marriage with a man I hate would be criminal, it would be of course unhappy; and even were it innocent, it is so *very unhappy*, that for my own part I think the sacrifice of my life would seem a trifle in the comparison. I still think that it would be less cruel in my parent to command my death, (were this power allowed him by the laws, as it was amongst the Romans) than to exact this instance of my obedience. And as our happiness or unhappiness must depend on our own notions and apprehensions of it, as the same circumstance which might possibly produce the idea of *pleasure* in my father, might produce that of *pain* in me, according to our different sensations; no one, however superior in experience and judgment, should be too confident in judging what will or what will not conduce to the happiness of another; since it is the same thing to me

whether I am made miserable by the force of my imagination, or by the necessary operation of outward circumstances; the effect is still the same; *I am unhappy* whether my father or mother would have been so in my situation or not.

You object to the words "*bid her* destroy all the peace and happiness of her life, and *commanded* to give up her innocence, &c." 'Tis true as you say the Harlowes did not use those expressions; *they bade her be rich*, and consequently, in their opinion, *happy*; they (in effect) bade her regard no oaths, no vows, when money was to be got; for *they* would, I suppose, have done so in her case. They bade her not expect felicity in the smiles of innocence, the peace, the health of virtue, the rational pleasures of well-grounded mutual love;

> "Perfect esteem, enliven'd by desire
> "Ineffable, and sympathy of soul,
> "Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
> "With boundless confidence"—

but in the consciousness of being *rich*; in the envy of fools, in the arrogance of plenty, in the *hopes* of surviving her husband, and of being the *richer* for his *poverty of soul*. These, I suppose, were the Harlowes' ideas of happiness. But why were they not satisfied with thinking and acting in this manner for *themselves?* If *they* preferred money to every thing else, let them pursue it,

through all the bogs and quagmires which they find in their way to it. But why should they drag *Clarissa* after them? who, not having their desires, had no reason to engage in their pursuits; they must know enough of her mind to know that avarice was not *her* predominant passion, though it was *theirs;* they must know that *she* did not think money the *one thing needful,* though they did. And *whose* happiness were they to provide for? *whose* soul was to be bound in league with Solmes? and *who* was to take the charge of a vow, and to answer for the performance of it? You ask me, in the former part of your letter, "Who is to be the judge in nice or dubious cases, the parent or the child?" It should seem that this was a dubious case, since it was strenuously disputed, and the opinions of the parents and the child were directly opposite. If you ask the question with regard to such a case as this, I readily answer, the child; because it is the *child's* happiness, and the *child's* conscience only which are concerned; for no advantage or pleasure could have accrued to *them* by her submitting in this point, in any degree proportionable to the disadvantages and pains which *she* must have suffered by such a submission. Therefore as it was not a struggle for a point which equally concerned them both, but the affair of the *child* principally, if not solely, she it is that must decide; and

all that they had a right to in this case was to offer their reasons and advice, and if they had not force enough to conquer her objections, and convince her reason, the final determination must be left to her.

But after all, I grant that the opinion of the parents that what they commanded was for the good of the child, *does lessen their guilt*, though the effect is the same with regard to *her*. If my parent is mad, and gives me poison for food, though I am effectually *killed*, yet my parent is not guilty of *murder*. And thus much I will allow to the Harlowe father and mother, that when they bade her be *guilty* and *miserable*, they did not understand the import of their words, and thought they bade her be happy. And this, though it aggravates their *absurdity*, lessens their *guilt:* though I cannot help suspecting that, blind and infatuated as they were, they did not wholly regard the happiness of their child in this match. The vanity of having it said that *their daughter* was nobly provided for, or the distant prospect of some lucre to *themselves*, or to their *other* children, must have determined them in their obstinacy. And this the father himself confesses, when he says, *he had rather have no child in her, than one he could not dispose of for her* OWN *good, and the good of his* WHOLE FAMILY. In which I presume he includes *himself*. And I shall always

suspect this to be *one*, if not a principal motive with all parents who act as he did.

I must likewise retract from the force of these words: "*A guilt* that would *drag her into perdition.*" This I own is expressed with too much warmth; for there is no single act of sin, of which we should dare to say that it will drag a person into *perdition.* And you were greatly in the right, my good, my kind instructer, to reprove me for this presumption. I only *meant* (however my impetuosity might hurry me to choose the most forcible words which occurred to me, without considering their full import, and this is too often my fault) that it was an act, which would have been offensive to the Almighty, and drawn on her his displeasure: a displeasure, which, however, would no doubt have been very much mitigated by the terrors and persecutions which had driven her to it, and which repentance would certainly have appeased. "Clarissa, as Mr. Jeoffrey justly observes, dies a martyr to her chastity, and to the cruelty of her relations, and her lover." Her trials were so great, that had she failed in any of them, she would have been greatly to be pitied; and who knows how far excused in the sight of God? But yet there are some things to be considered, besides what I have already mentioned, which aggravate the guilt of such marriages. Remember, dear sir, that the minister before he joins the

pair, requires them, "As they shall answer it at the dreadful day of judgment, to confess if they know any impediment; and bids them be assured that so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's word doth allow, are not joined together by God, neither is their marriage lawful."

Is not hatred on one side an *impediment?* And can those be joined together by God, or agreeably to his word, who marry, not for any of the reasons set forth in the service, but merely to gratify the avarice of their parents, or their own: not to live together in love, to love each other as themselves, but to loath and despise each other? If a marriage then is made on such bad inducements, and with such bad views,

"If it be no more,
"Portia is Brutus' *harlot*, not his *wife*."

Give me leave now to thank you, my dear sir, for those excellent passages out of Clarissa, which you have quoted, and which contain maxims that do indeed savour of the divine spirit, but which I hope are not inconsistent with those advanced by me. I admire and love your Clarissa (do you think I don't?) as much as yourself can do, for that meekness of temper which she joined to the most heroic magnanimity, and that noble generosity, which enables her to plead so disinterestedly for her cruel relations against herself. And I agree with you that this constant readiness

blindness of the old man's eyes, to answer his prayers otherwise than he desired or intended. "Besides* this prediction regards rather the posterity of Jacob and Esau than themselves, and was not fulfilled in their own persons: Esau was never subject to Jacob, but lived apart in Mount Seir, where he founded a distinct people and government, and was himself prince over them, as much as Jacob was in his own family; and Jacob several times calls Esau lord, and himself his servant, and bowed himself seven times to the ground to Esau."

I own I cannot see how this instance from scripture can be applied to the case before us, for the reasons I have given.

But though I think Clarissa had not the least shadow of reason to fear that her father's curse would be prevalent with God, yet I allow that it would have been unnatural in her character not to be shocked at it, to the last degree; particularly for her father's own sake.

She had indeed reason to fear that he had drawn on himself divine displeasure, and this concern for his eternal welfare and worldly fame, who had none for hers, is a most noble, and amiable grief, worthy of Clarissa, worthy of a christian.

* Locke on government.

I entirely approve of every step she took to move him to withdraw this curse; but I could have wished that it could have been done with less pain to her own heart, and that her fears should have been alarmed for *him*, for the guilty and unnatural imprecator only, and not for her innocent self, who had the justest reason to depend on that favour and mercy from the Supreme Being, which he has promised to those who love him, and desire to please him.

I would not have her reason upon false principles, as I think she does, when she calls herself a *wretch devoted;* and adds "How can it be otherwise? If a parent's curses have the weight I always attributed to them, and have heard so many instances of their being followed by?"

However, as you impute *all* this fear to the weakness and dejection of her *spirits*, rather than to any error in judgment or principles, I have no more to say. If this is made clear, her unreasonable apprehensions cannot give any just handle to those whose interest it is to depreciate the worth of religious characters, and to endeavour to find out absurdities in their principles, to accuse her of superstition, and from thence to call in question the foundation of her other virtues.

And let me have your pardon, dear sir, for having drawn this unjust conclusion from an unjust supposition, that you did not mean to ascribe *all*

her terror to infirmity, but to make her an example of filial duty and reverence, by this proof of an uncommon, and I think unreasonable apprehension of paternal power, as well as by the other instances she gives of an almost implicit deference to the authority of her parents. For though you do indeed put into the mouth of Miss Howe some consolatory arguments, yet they seem not to have any great weight with Clarissa, since she afterwards gives way to the same fears and terrors which Miss Howe endeavours to cure her of. So that I apprehend they were owing rather to an habitual and fixed prejudice, than to occasional weakness and vapourishness. You tell me you have in the new edition strengthened these arguments of Miss Howe's, and that you gave Clarissa this weakness to keep up the probability of a human character; therefore it is plain that I misapprehended your design herein, for which I once more ask pardon.

Let me now renew my thanks to you, good sir, for that most excellent paragraph in the conclusion of your letter, in which you set forth the advantages of religion. "Happy is the man who lives to his own conscience; and who regards the opinion of the world but as a secondary consideration! He always will have the *right-tested* virtue, who, if he errs, errs against his own interests, and is readier in a nice or doubtful case to give the

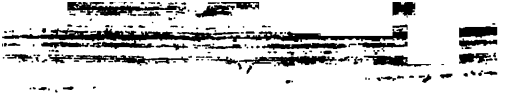
turn of the scale in his own disfavour than favour." These are words which I will lay up in my heart, and which I hope will not fail to present themselves to my memory in all nice or doubtful cases which may occur in the course of my life.

I am frighted to see what a quantity I have written. You bid me not spare you, and I have not indeed been sparing of your patience, which I fear I have quite exhausted. But forgive me, and as a proof that you do so, let me have the pleasure of seeing you soon; otherwise I shall think I have been too pert, and that my dear Mr. Richardson is angry with his

Ever obliged humble servant,

H. MULSO.

November 10, 1750.



THIRD LETTER

ON

FILIAL OBEDIENCE.

BY MISS MULSO.

TO MR. RICHARDSON.

January 3, 1750-51.

DEAR SIR,

I KNOW not whether you will not laugh, and call me vain, when I say that I had almost resolved not to write to you again on the subject of our present correspondence, had you not so greatly obliged me, by giving to my entreaties the supplement to your last, which you had intended to keep from me; as if your taking the trouble to read what I scribble, were not a fresh obligation! Yet I cannot help expressing my gratitude in this way for your distinguishing kindness in bestowing so much time and pains on one who can so ill repay your goodness; and who for all the pride, the pleasure and improvement she has received from your friendship and correspondence, has nothing to offer you but her sincerest thanks, her best esteem, and an affection and reverence next to filial; nothing to entertain you with but the rude essays of an ignorant girl, the unconnected sallies of a wild imagination, with but little judgment to direct or control it.

But you will wonder why I should have intended not to answer your last favour. My reason was, that I began to perceive (at least I thought I did) that we were both on the same side of the question; or rather, that we had left Bishop Hall, and

Mr. Locke's first quoted paragraph, in the opposite extremities, and were advancing to meet each other in the happy medium. I therefore thought nothing remained to be done, but to sign to the article which you have already set your name to, shake hands, and lay by our weapons. But as you did not seem quite pleased with this, and as you were so good as to give up your own intentions to my importunity, it is fit that I also should give up mine; and I sit down to write, highly pleased, with the thought, that I shall convince you we differ not so materially, as perhaps we at first imagined. And surely this will not be difficult after my dear Mr. Richardson has himself asserted, that Mr. Locke, even in the very passages I have quoted, is of *his* side. I am pretty sure that Mr. Locke is on *my* side; therefore it is plain that we are all three on the *same* side. So let us even make a league in triumvirate; or, if you will, let us admit the good Bishop Fleetwood into the confederacy; for *he*, you have *owned*, is on *my side*. But pray observe I bar Bishop Hall, who would reduce me to the condition of an Indian skreen, and allow my father to item me amongst his goods and chattels, and put me up to sale for the highest bidder; or if this pleases me not, will give me leave to call myself one of his hands (I hope it is the right hand) which is to have no direction or power of acting but what he gives it; no will, no under-

standing of its own; and which, if it offends him, he may *cut off and cast it from him.* Well! this was *but* a bishop, not a pope; I think the good man did not pretend to infallibility in any character but that of a *father:* so let him sleep in peace. The author of the Whole Duty of Man I likewise exclude from the treaty; and with him, all those who talk of rational beings as the *property* and *possessions* of a fellow creature, like the cattle upon his estate. Algernon Sydney is admitted, who speaks of *the duty of children as arising from benefits received.* That duty which arises from benefits received, is *gratitude.* Was it not the same Sydney who wrote on government? If so, I believe he is a good and faithful ally of mine, and I thank you for introducing him into the league.

But that I may know with certainty how far we agree or differ, will you give me leave, for once, to be a saucy girl, and catechise my adopted papa? Though indeed I do not mean to do it saucily, but really and truly for my information. For when you left it to me to make the applications, inferences, and conclusions, from all the quotations, stories, and observations you produced, you left me a task which would have been much better performed by yourself; my head is not clear enough to do it as I ought. Permit me then, my dear sir, to put it upon you to decide on the questions I am going to put: and when I have your

positive answer to these, I shall know whether we have all this while been arguing about words, and whether what Mr. Locke calls *honour*, what I called *gratitude*, and what you called *duty*, be indeed the same thing or not.

I grant that Mr. Locke's and your observation is very likely to be true, that parents in *general* are not apt to exceed on the severe side. But yet there are some instances (and those not so few as to be deemed prodigies) of inhuman and unnatural parents. Question. What must *their* children do, if "the want of duty on one side, justifies not the non-performance of it on the other, where there is a reciprocal duty?" Must they then pay the same obedience to cruel tyrants as they would do to kind and indulgent parents? If so, what advantage would *they* reap from living in a free country, if there is no remedy against domestic tyrants? if conscience shall tie up a child from seeking redress against injurious parents? In your first letter you ask, "Shall the child think itself at liberty, whenever it is *disobliged*, to disobey, or the subject to rebel?" But give me leave to state the question in words a little stronger than this equivocal expression, *disobliged;* and to ask you, whether the child, (I speak now of children in the state of freedom, that is, at the age of reason) when *injured*, when *cruelly* and *inhumanly* treated, when *deprived of its natural rights*,

and reduced to a state of slavery, is not *then* at liberty to disobey, or the subject to rebel? If not, I see not what check can be put to injustice and cruelty, crimes which are almost the inseparable consequence of despotic power, which is so ill suited to the nature of man, that it seldom fails to intoxicate him, and overturn his reason and virtue.

> ..... Man, proud man,
> Drest in a little brief authority,
> Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
> His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heav'n,
> As make the angels weep.

"But," say you, "suppose the parent or the king exert his authority to the grievance of the child, or the subject; who is to be judge of the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the exertion?" The measures of the king's authority are in this country I believe more exactly settled, and may be more precisely known than those of the parent's, which are left a good deal to human reason to wrangle about; nor are the exact bounds of this authority settled by written and positive laws, to which both the parent and the child may refer in particular cases. Therefore, if the point between them be not such as mankind in general are agreed about, or which the law decides, it seems to me, that the interposition of some unbiassed persons is then necessary. For if, in dubi-

ous cases, the parent is always to determine the fit or the unfit, he being interested as well as the child, it is easy to see that there is little justice to be hoped for, for the latter; and it would be more unreasonable, that the child should decide, on a point which equally concerned them both; although (as I have said, and as you have granted) those cases in which the child's conscience and happiness are *principally*, if not *solely* concerned, should be left to the decision of the child. But this is one question which I would refer back to you for an answer, viz. who is to be judge in points contestible, of the reasonableness, or unreasonableness of the exertion of the parent's authority?

There is no hardship in obeying the just, the wise, and good: *absolute* POWER in the hands of such (if it did not corrupt their virtue, which it too often does), would be an advantage and happiness to those who should submit to it. But what miseries may not great power produce in the hands of bad men! The question is then, whether the bare title of father or mother, shall give to such, a right to make their children miserable for life? And if not, what kind or degree of duty is owing to such, and on what grounds?

If women, as daughters or wives, must necessarily be in a state of subjection and dependency, if they can have no creditable place of refuge or

residence but the houses of their parents whilst unmarried, quere, whether Miss B——s, whose mother used frequently to strike them down on the floor, and then trample on them; whose maid servants have fainted away at the sight of the cruelties she exercised on her grown-up daughters, without provocation, whether, I say, these young women would not have had a right, in case any kind friend had given or left them an independent fortune, to have left their mother, and lived by themselves, or where they pleased? and whether the world, with all its malice, would have blamed them for so doing? Whether Miss W. whose father, though he had an easy fortune, and she was his only child, denied her common necessaries, so that, when she was thirty years old, she has been obliged to a friend for food and raiment, though she lived in her father's house, whether she might not, had it been in her power, have lived separate from her father, and disclaimed his authority? Whether Miss —— (that intimate friend of mine whose Yahoo parents I mentioned in my last) who from the age of fifteen (when she left her grandfather who educated her) till three or four and twenty, when by the death of a friend she gained an independent fortune, never knew one happy hour from the undeard-of cruelties of her father and mother, was not in the right, on being mistress of this fortune, to leave her

mother (her father being then dead) and take lodgings for herself in a reputable family, though by it she has drawn on herself so great anger, that her mother will not see her? And whether she has any reason to be uneasy on recollecting the innumerable curses and solemn maledictions, which that vile woman frequently loaded her with, on the slightest or on no provocations? Whether this wicked mother has not forfeited all right in her daughter, by the various injuries and cruelties she has always persisted to heap on her, since she left her grandfather's to live with her? Or whether the bare name of mother, the obligation of bringing her into the world, which is an involuntary obligation, (for she owed not her education and support to the age of fifteen to her,) is to preponderate all the injuries she has endured from her? Whether the duty of a child, arising from benefits received, is not in this case entirely cancelled, and the child at liberty to dispose of herself, her property, and all her actions as freely as if she were an orphan? I doubt not but these horrid instances of cruelty in parents will seem to you as inconceivable, and almost incredible, as the behaviour of some of those daughters whose stories you told me, did to me; but since we have the mortification to know that there are such monsters to disgrace human nature in the form of men and women, it is necessary, before

we lay down a rule that no want of duty on the parents's side can dispense with that of the child, to consider what must be the consequence of it to the unhappy children of such parents as I have mentioned. Instances of the like nature come within every one's particular knowledge; and if I knew as much of the world as you, perhaps I should be able to produce as long and as black a catalogue of parents as you have done of children.

But these cases shew of what consequence it is to have this point settled, whether the *duty of honour*, which is *perpetual*, and which Bishop Fleetwood explains as including *love*, *respect*, OBEDIENCE, *succour* and *support*, be owing to the bare title of father or mother, or to those great and unreturnable benefits, which good parents (even tolerably good parents) confer on their children? If you will allow that it is owing only to the latter, I too have allowed that filial gratitude obliges children to the same submission to the will of their parents, when grown up, as in their infant years; in all cases, except where a higher duty interferes, or where the sacrifice they are expected to make is greater than any degree of gratitude can require. And as one case, (and that the most general and common case wherein parents and children differ) where a higher duty *does* interfere, and where the sacrifice expected *is* greater than any degree of gratitude can require, I instanced

that of marriage with a hated object: (If I had said an indifferent one, I think I should not have gone too far;) which is contrary to our duty to God, to a husband, and to ourselves; and which would disturb, if not destroy, the happiness of the child's whole life. You agree with me in thinking that parents have no right to force a child to marry against inclination; that where this is attempted, children have a right to resist, and to use every method their own prudence can suggest to get out of their parent's power; in short, to disclaim an authority which is made use of, not according to its true end, &c. This YOU have agreed to; and *I* on the other hand have agreed to the parent's negative; and shall do it with still more pleasure, if the law you have laid down be allowed the weight it ought to have with all parents, that (at any time of the child's life from eighteen to thirty and upwards) the parents shall not, unless they can give superior reasons, refuse their consent to a child who, by her wisdom, prudence, discretion, justifies unexceptionably her passion for a particular object. This is a kind and indulgent law, my dear sir, I wish with all my heart all parents would submit to it, and *our* Bishop Fleetwood recommends this to them with great humanity.

"If there be reason," says he, "that young people should be left in any thing to themselves,

and to their own liberty, it seems to be in the choice of those with whom they are to live and die, with whom they are to venture being happy or unhappy all their days, it is, without doubt, in nothing so necessary as in marriage."

P. 243. He declares himself in strong terms against a man's marrying without a previous affection, and says *he cannot answer it to God.* And speaking of the father, justly observes, that no one can have authority to make an innocent person miserable.

But whilst fathers are taught by Bishop Hall, (I don't love that Bishop Hall, why did you quote him?) and the author of the Whole Duty of Man, to consider their children as their *goods and chattels*, things which they have as much right to dispose of as their own limbs, they will hardly choose to have their power limited by the wisdom and discretion of their children, and to be obliged to give superior reasons whenever they contradict their inclinations. Reasons are things which absolute monarchs seldom care to be troubled with; and the petty tyrants of families, as well as those of nations, have seldom a high opinion of the wisdom of their dependants, and would be apt to answer the reasons of a child as I have heard an imperious master answer the excuses of a servant, "You thought! how *dare* you *think?* Do I keep you *to think?*"

But here I cannot help noticing a little what follows this mild and just law of my dear Mr. Richardson's in behalf of children. "Dare you, madam, for the generality of the *hasty*, the *impatients*, the IMPETUOUS, abide by this test?" Oh, wo is me! if I am to answer for all the *hasty*, the *impatients*, the *impetuous!* because I once called myself impetuous in my expressions, and ventured to own a suspicion that tyranny and oppression might have roused in me a spirit of rebellion, (I should rather have said of *brave and laudable resistance;* I believe I meant a *brag* rather than a *confession:)* here am I on a sudden placed at the head of a *regiment of hastys, impatients,* and *impetuous;* but indeed I like not the *regimentals;* for I think you have presented me with a set of Amazonian soldiers, all drest in flame-coloured taffety, expert in leaping windows, or scaling walls, but whose conduct is by no means equal to their courage, in which last quality they do indeed exceed Thalestris herself, that famous female warrior who travelled so far to pay a kind visit to Alexander the Great. Choose therefore, I beseech you, some veteran widow to lead the hardy troops; for I find myself intimidated by your challenge, and absolutely unqualified for the command.

Now, my dear sir, call me Anna Howe, for now I deserve it. But you must give me leave to be

a little pert and saucy sometimes; especially when a stroke I did not deserve furnishes me with something like an excuse for it.

In the next paragraph you tell me I am "the greatest friend young fellows ever had; yet intend honour to my sex all the while." And why is this? because you will suppose me pleading for the flame-coloured regiment, and denying parents their negative; in short, making "poor parents nothing at all;" as you tell me in another place. Surely I express myself very unintelligibly! or how could my meaning have been so much mistaken? When I have declared that in my opinion even life itself is hardly too great a sacrifice to make to those to whom we owe life; that we are bound to the same submission after we are grown up, by gratitude, as in childhood, by our ignorance and inability to guide our own actions; excepting only those cases where conscience and reason forbid us to comply; when I had expressly said that in the particular case of marriage I only insisted on a negative for the child, and allowed that gratitude, or the duty of honouring parents (which Mr. Locke says is perpetual, from which no state, no freedom can absolve children) forbids them to dispose of themselves without consent, unless they had first cast them out of their protection, or, by abusing their authority, given the children a right to disclaim it. When

Mr. Locke so plainly declares that children are by the laws of God and Nature tied up all their lives from doing any thing that may ever injure or affront, disturb or endanger the happiness, or life, of those to whom they owe their own; and when such matches as you speak of do so evidently *disgrace, affront, injure,* and *disturb* an indulgent father; whose whole happiness was perhaps centred in one darling child; permit me to wonder a little that I should be understood to plead for such! That the *Calista-spirited girls* should be so much aided by the consequences of my doctrine! Poor Mr. Locke, who is called PUZZLING LOCKE, would, I doubt not, have answered just as you would have him, had the stories you relate been fairly represented to him, and would have joined with me to condemn the shameless runaways as guilty of the blackest ingratitude, and breach of that duty, which, as Clarissa observes, is anterior to all others, except those we owe to the Supreme Being. He could not mean to advance a doctrine contrary to the express commands of God, (for he believed the revealed religion) and to the sentiments and practice of all good people in all nations and all ages. He could not mean, nor could your child mean, to make "poor parents nothing at all," nor to justify those who "have set light by father and mother." I own that the first paragraph I quoted

from him is carelessly expressed; and indeed, as far as I can judge, he seldom picks and chooses his expressions, and seems not at all to pique himself on a style in any of his works that I have seen. Strength of thought and clear reasoning, were, I thought, his peculiar excellences; and *ours* is, I believe, the first cause he ever *puzzled*. However, upon the whole of his chapter on paternal power, or even of those passages I transcribed, I think it is plain that he only means to distinguish between the father's power during minority, and that which he is entitled to as the greatest benefactor all his life. The first of these is absolute, or limited only by the laws of the society; the child being incapable of directing his own actions, or of having any will of his own, his obedience must be implicit: but as his reason increases, he gains a right to examine the commands of his parents, and is to submit to such only as his reason and conscience direct him to submit to; and if his parents usurp upon his natural rights, and oblige him to do what is unlawful, or destructive of his own happiness and good, he may resist, and defend himself from their tyranny by all lawful means. "The same reason," says Sydney of government, "which obliges a child to submit *entirely* to the will of his parents when he is ignorant of all things, does *permit*, and often *enjoin*

persons of ripe age to *examine* the commands of their parents *before* they obey them."

The following passage, translated from Grotius, was given me by a common friend of ours, himself a father, but who, nevertheless, carries his notions of the liberty of children farther than I think reasonable; and against whom I have argued on the side of parents. *He* does not think me desirous of reducing poor parents to nothing at all.

"Children may be ranged under three heads, the first are endued with imperfect judgment, as Aristotle terms it, and have no choice of their own. The second class are such as have perfect judgment, but are part of their parent's family. And the third, of such as are separated from it. All the actions of the former of these are controllable by their parents; for it is but just, that those who cannot govern themselves, should be governed by others; and who can so naturally govern them as their parents? In the second season, when the judgment is matured by age, none of their actions are controllable by their parents, but such as immediately regard their parents' family; for it is but reasonable that a *part* should be subservient to the *whole*. But in every thing else, the children have then a liberty or moral power of acting. They ought indeed to study to please their parents, but this is not required of

them by any moral obligation, but by the common principles of *duty* and *gratitude*. In the third season, the children are in every particular their own masters, always observing the principles above mentioned, whose obligation is perpetual."

There seems to me to be some confusion in the expressions of this passage, for I know not what distinction is meant between *moral obligation* and the *principles of duty and gratitude*. However, upon the whole, I understand from this passage that Grotius is of the same opinion with Locke with regard to the different rights of the father; the right of tuition, during minority, and the right of honour all his life, which last right seems to be founded on the title of *benefactor*, and the duty of the child to arise from *benefits received*, or in other words from the *principle of gratitude*, and not from any natural *superiority* of the father over the son, since both are naturally *free* at the age of reason; (God having given man an understanding to direct his actions, has annexed a liberty of acting as properly belonging thereto,) and since in the case of a child neglected and exposed by its parents, all its duty would be transferred to the charitable hand which nourished and preserved it.

But I cannot help transcribing a passage from Puffendorff, which I am furnished with from the same hand, because it clearly and exactly expresses *my* sentiments, and because I flatter

myself it does not differ much from yours. Perhaps we shall both subscribe to this, which will entirely finish our debate.

"The parental authority, strictly considered, should vary according to their children's different ages. In their infancy, when they have not attained the perfect use of their reason, all their actions should be directed by their parents. When they are of riper years, but still remain in their parents family, a distinction should be made between that authority the father has, as such, and what he has as master of the family. But when the child has left his parents, and gained a family of his own, or lives in another, the parental authority is then dissolved, though there always remains a debt of duty and regard. But as the father cannot turn his children out of his family without the strongest reasons whilst they are in want of his assistance, so they cannot leave it without their father's consent. But since the children have often occasion to leave it on account of marriage, and the father is concerned in their alliances, *The filial duty plainly requires that they should take their parents' advice, and not marry contrary to it.* But if they do, it is not by the law of nature void, especially if they are no longer a burden to their father's family, and if the alliance is otherwise advantageous.

"The parental duty chiefly consists in properly educating their children, and so instructing and

forming their minds and bodies as to render them fit and useful members of society, and worthy and moral men. They should also bring them up to some honest profession, and, as far as they are able, lay the foundation of, and improve their fortunes.

"The filial duty consists in honouring their parents; that is, by testifying their regard not only in outward tokens, but rather by inwardly esteeming them as the authors of their being, and all the blessings that attend it; in obeying them, in relieving them to the utmost extent of their abilities, especially if they labour under age or poverty; in undertaking nothing of importance without their advice and consent; and finally bearing with their infirmities, or, if they have any, with their vices."

I am ready to subscribe to all that Puffendorff here says, with *this proviso*, that the *filial duty*, as here explained, be owing only to such as perform the *parental duty;* for with regard to such as do not, I am of the opinion of the author of the Preceptor, which I am told is an excellent book.

"But if," says he, "any parent should be so inhuman as to consider and treat his children like his other goods and chattels, surely whenever they *dare*, they *may* resist, and whenever they *can*, shake off that unnatural yoke, and be free with

that liberty with which God and nature invested them."

What say you, my dear sir? Will you subscribe and admit my proviso?

But it is necessary I should say something in justification of my inference from Mr. Locke's arguments in favour of daughters as well as son's, which you object to. I allow the force of all those considerations which you have laid before me; nor have I aught to object to the truth of any one of them except the last. "That a woman, either as daughter or wife, never can be in a state of independency." Women seldom are in a state of independency; but if they have independent fortunes, which sometimes happens in their parents' life time, and if their parents, by unjust treatment (as in the cases I mentioned) have forfeited their right in them, they *then may be* in a state of independency. But admitting the truth of all your other considerations, I presume to think that they do not overturn my assertion, that the son and the daughter are bound by the same duty to their parents, and that natural liberty arising from reason, it can never be proved that women have not a right to it, unless it can be proved that they are not capable of knowing the law they are under. And whatever difference particular circumstances, or the customs of the world, may make, these destroy not a *general truth*, that *women*, as rational

and accountable beings, are free agents as well as *men*. And with respect to daughters, there is no law, either natural or revealed, which makes any difference between the obedience due from them, and from the male children. Therefore, whatever superiority men may claim, (and I do not intend to dispute it with them) with regard to this duty, *as a duty*, we are upon a *par;* although the customs of the world make the breach of it more fatal in its consequences to the daughter than to the son. The rules of the world being made by *men*, are always more severe on *women* than on themselves, insomuch that as you observe, "perpetrated crimes in a man hurt not his reputation in the world's eye half so effectually as imprudences in a woman." Indeed I don't know that any crimes except cowardice and stealing, (stealing of *money* I mean, stealing of daughters or wives is nothing;) disqualify a man from being received into all companies, and living with credit in the world. But though men's ways are unequal, the ways of God are equal, and with him *even women* shall find justice.

"But however grievous it may be to the *meek* and *modest* dear souls, (very well Mr. Richardson!) God and Nature," say you, "make women dependent on the parent, as we have seen; and the law of God and their own choice and consent make them dependent on their husbands." This

last is certainly true, and that which is the effect of our own choice or consent, we can have no great right to complain of: and you will be pleased to remember that when I spoke with such disdain of the mean wretch of a husband, strutting about full of the sense of his new prerogatives, and puffed up almost to bursting, with the pride of having a creature every way his superior in his power, and bound to obey him, I suppose this match *not* the effect of the lady's own choice; I supposed *her* a *Clarissa*, and *him* a *Solmes*; and surely then it was not too presumptuous to call her his *superior*; surely it may be granted us, that one of the *best* of *women* may be superior to one of the *worst* and *lowest of men*; since I have heard it affirmed, that the wisest of *brutes* have more understanding than the weakest and silliest of men. But with regard to parents, I own I do not see that *God* and *nature* have made daughters *more* dependent on them than sons. Custom indeed allows not the daughters of people of fashion to leave their father's family to seek their own subsistence, and there is no way for them to gain a creditable livelihood, as gentlemen may. But amongst the lower ranks of people, daughters are as soon independent as sons. The girls and boys are alike sent out to provide for themselves. Now the laws of God and nature are the same with regard to all conditions and ranks of people,

Therefore this is a proof that nature makes no such difference between sons and daughters; and I have never heard of any divine law which imposes on daughters any duty to parents which is not equally imposed on sons. It is moreover observable, that the duty is equal to *both* parents; so that the mother, though a female, has as much right to the obedience of her son as the father; and this shews, that the duty arises not from any natural superiority of the parents over the children, but from those benefits they have conferred on them.

"Ye shall fear every man his *mother* and his father." Lev. xix. 3. Is it not strange though, that the Lord of the creation should be commanded to *fear* a *woman?*

With regard to the other texts of scripture you have cited, I am sure I never meant, and I humbly presume Mr. Locke never meant, to maintain a doctrine contradictory to them. (Don't you cry hum! now.) Many of them plainly relate to minors only, as where they mention *the rod,* and chastening their sons; for I am sure you will not allow that a man should be *beaten.* For the rest, which command *obedience* to parents, they can only be understood to mean a *reasonable* obedience; such as is consistent with the liberty of a rational creature. But there is one text which makes me wish to understand Hebrew; and that is the ad-

vice of the wise man, "Shew not thyself *cheerful* towards thy daughters." Methinks I have a great curiosity to know what that word is in the original, which is here translated cheerful. If it indeed means the same thing, I must say that it is a true *Eastern* precept. But the consequences of it, in this part of the world, would, I imagine, be such as no wise man would wish for. If the parent will not shew himself cheerful before his daughters, of course they will not dare to be cheerful before him. They will therefore shun and fly from his presence, and never think themselves happy but when they are out of his sight; for who can be easy under perpetual restraint? They will be so far from considering him as their best friend, from opening their hearts to him, and trusting him with their most secret wishes and designs, that they will not dare to declare any one sentiment or opinion before him, and he will be more a stranger to their minds than any one person of their acquaintance. How then shall his counsel direct them, his experience inform them, or his virtue mend their hearts? They will indeed consider him with awe and fear; but who would wish to be observed from fear alone, who knows how much more assiduous and ready are the services of love! The fear of offending, and the desire of pleasing, are the inseparable attendants of love; but servile fear, and distant awe,

will always chill the warmth of affection, and produce a constrained and painful submission. He may confine their bodies; but the free soul will be out of his power, which only love and gratitude can bind. These sentiments, dear sir, I know are your own. You could not possibly suppose, (although you took the pains to justify yourself from it) that I could ever suspect you of being capable of tyranny; have I not said that tyranny is the triumph of low minds? it can never therefore be yours. It is the privilege of the good, to establish their empire in the hearts of their dependants; this is the triumph of my dear Mr. Richardson; and then indeed does his excellent heart exult, when he sees every one the happier and better for their connection with him! I am sure you did not mean to recommend severe restraint, unless to shameless daughters only. Such as the abandoned Lady V——, the wretched Delia, the *delicate* lady, who threatens her father that she will marry the first shoe-boy she meets, and the rest of the *flame-coloured taffety nymphs*, who do so much *honour* to the *fair sex*.

But you are very angry, my dear sir, with your child, for speaking so freely of the maxims of the generality of parents with regard to what they call *disposing* of their children; very angry indeed! And you tell me that it is *far, very far* otherwise. I must therefore have *dreamt* that the prudent

part of the world generally consider fortune much more than any thing else, in the matches they provide for their children. I must have *dreams*, (for I did not invent it) that those marriages which are made up by the parents are *generally* (amongst people of quality or great fortune,) mere Smithfield bargains, so much ready money for so much land, and my daughter flung in into the bargain! I must have been asleep, when I fancied I heard experienced people talk of an honourable engagement with a person of small fortune, however worthy, however suitable by birth, merit, and temper, as *madness and folly*; and those young women applauded as miracles of discretion and wisdom, who have sacrificed themselves to a fool or knave with a good estate. I took it into my head, I can't tell why, that fathers and mothers, now-a-days, frequently dressed out their daughters, and sent them into public places, with an appearance of five times the fortune they could give them, in hopes that they might catch—what? Not a man of sense and worth, who should make them happier and better, but a fool, a rich fool; for their baits are calculated only for such gudgeons; no other can they hope to take. But you know infinitely more of the world than I, for little of this great world have I seen; and may be I was mistaken when I thought that parents in *general*, (at least amongst the rich and great) consult-

ed not their children's inclinations, or their *real* happiness in marriage, but sought to procure them the goods of fortune only. I thought this was the way of thinking of the generality of parents; and I thought it an absurd, a base and sordid way of thinking. Nor was I so warm upon the subject from any selfish bias; *I* never was under any engagement of this kind; nor if I had, should I have found any such sordid way of thinking in my excellent father, as is evident from his conduct towards his other children. But how few parents act like him! I beg your pardon, you say the generality do; I am not then so peculiarly blest as I thought I was, and I rejoice to hear that the world is so much wiser and better than I took it to be.

But you argue from the natural tenderness which is implanted in mankind towards their offspring. I am far from believing that every parent who thus *disposes* of his child with a view of raising her fortune, *wants* this natural tenderness; on the contrary, their mistaken zeal to promote a wretched match for her, often proceeds from that very tenderness and love. But you must give me leave to think those people absurd, though not unnatural, who propose to establish the happiness of their children on so bad a foundation. Nor will I confine this mercenary turn of mind to the parents only; it sometimes infects the children too, and the young folks sometimes

enter very willingly into the dirty scheme of selling themselves. Indeed there seem to be two sorts of marriages now in vogue: one is the prudent bargain of so many acres for so many pounds, and a *separate maintenance* secured. The other is Hymen himself in his *flame-coloured robe*, who with his torch, *or link*, lights the adventurous damsel out of the window into the post-chaise; she, whose gentle heart has been struck quite through, by an arrow which flew from *that half* of her lover's right eye, which was visible under his hat and feather. Which of these two methods of marrying is most likely to produce happiness, I don't know; let those who have tried both, determine. But methinks if it could be brought into fashion to choose for merit, and to make matches of souls, we should not hear of so many wives that swear the peace against their husbands, nor of so many husbands that sue for divorces and damages. But this, as the world goes now, is a project as wild as those of the philosophers of Laputa, and nobody but a romantic girl would ever have thought of it.

I think Mrs. Howe's reasoning very just, and very sensible with regard to such love as she speaks of, the blazing, sputtering, crackling flame, which is founded on mere notional excel-

lences, or on a first-sighted impression. Shakspeare makes one of his characters say

"Who ever lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?"

But I fancy it might with more propriety be asked, Who ever loved, in the best sense of the word, that *did* love at first sight? Wherever I have mentioned love with any degree of respect, I suppose I need not say that I meant such a love as is founded on friendship, and which is very far from being a *sneaking*, *selfish*, *sordid* passion; since in my notion, as well as Clarissa's, no person can be justly said to love who does not prefer the happiness of the object beloved to their own. Your Clarindas, and Delias, your Sylvias, and Cœlias, your Mrs. M. and your Miss N. and the rest of the tribe, knew nothing at all of *this love*; had hearts incapable of it; nor do I believe there are many that are capable of it, although I hoped there had not been so many young ladies, modestly brought up, who were so capable of the other, the worst sort of love.

But how mortifying is the story of that lady whose excellent letter you transcribe! If such an understanding, so solid a way of thinking, could not defend her from so mean a passion, how humbling is the reflection! How greatly to be pitied is her father, who must have taken so much pride and pleasure in her! How grievous his disappointment! Happy for her mother, that she

lived not to share it! I am infinitely touched with this story, because of the uncommon character and understanding of the lady. I will be careful of the trust you have reposed in me; you may depend upon it, it shall not be seen out of our own family.

I thank you for the story of Clarinda, so extraordinary in itself, and so movingly and beautifully told. Another mortifying instance of amazing weakness or infatuation in an otherwise admirable character! Is there no such thing now-a-days as being possessed with a demon for a time? I would fain suppose something supernatural in these two cases, which may clear human nature of the disgrace which the fall of such women would bring upon it. Is not this owing to pride? I am afraid it is; therefore I will not seek to *load* the *poor devil* with faults which do not belong to him, but endeavour to make the best use of these humiliating proofs that women are

....."frail
"Ev'n as the glasses where they view themselves."

I am much obliged to you for all your stories, which are very entertaining and instructive. However, you will see, from my repeated declarations that filial duty and gratitude oblige the children of *good*, or even *tolerably good* parents, not to marry without their consent, that there needed not so many shocking examples to fright me into

a confession of this truth, or to convince me of the fatal consequences which attend the breach of this duty. I declare with Clarissa, that if a passion *can be* conquered, it is a sacrifice which a good child owes to an *indulgent parent!* And I make no doubt that *all* passions *can* be, if not absolutely conquered, at least restrained from breaking out into any act, that may ever *injure, disgrace,* or *dis[illegible] the happiness* of those to whom they owe life.

But I find myself got into the supplement before I have answered the letter; yet before I leave the *dear blue book,* I must quarrel a little with one passage in it, which I think is the only one I have to quarrel with. I always cry out when I am hurt ever so little; and perhaps you would think your strokes thrown away upon me, if I did not let you know that I felt them.

You tell me that when I answered Clarissa's words "*at any age,*" by putting the case of a single woman at *forty,* I made poor Clarissa hang down her head, and you blush: "and truly," proceed you, "you intimated, naughty girl as you were! that because the *men of prey,* whom I with Clarissa likened to *birds of prey,* did not, and could not, eat and drink quite up, or devour these intrepid, these venturesome girls, they had little or nothing else to fear from them." Who was it intimated this? Who was it that put you in mind

of the nonsensical pert answer of a little saucy forward minx of a girl to her careful mamma? Who could this be? Oh, I fancy it was one of the four ladies of quality that laughed at the sufferings of Clarissa, and wondered what yo u meant by making such a *rout* about *nothing*. Was it not one of those excellent ladies? I am sure it was not your Miss Mulso, your child. But is it thus you interpret my words, naughty M[redacted]ichardson? Because I carried on your own allusion; and when you likened the men of prey to hawks, vultures, and kites, likened the dangers young women have reason to fear from them, to those of a poor little chicken, just going to be snapt up and *devoured*. "Does it therefore follow, that because these men do not eat women, there is little or nothing else to fear from them?" Did I intimate any such thing? But I forgive you, provided you never say such a thing of me again.

Well! now I have done with *quarrelling*, I will go back to the letter. Whereabouts was I? Oh dear! what shall I do now! I have opened your letter just at the place where that *sad paragraph* is, that made me cry out so before! I intended never to have read it again, that I might have forgot it. Why had not I the heart to take a penknife and scratch it out, that it might not thus have obtruded itself on my sight? Why! Because it came from my dear Mr. Richardson, and, how-

ever severe it may appear, there is kindness under every word, and sweet instruction mixed with the bitterness of reproof. Live then upon the paper, and upon my memory, every stroke of his pen! For there is no gall in his ink, but only precious balm, and honied drops of salutary counsel. And now let me try to extract this honey, and not be afraid of the stings of self-condemnation. "But I am really sorry, my dear Miss Mulso, to find you, on more occasions than one, depreciate the understandings of parents; rein in, I beseech you, my dear child, on these important subjects, your charming imagination." See here! He calls me *my dear child*, and is sorry for my faults! Is not this *kindness?* But *did I* depreciate the understandings of parents, AS parents? *Did I mean to cast contempt* on the *paternal character?* My heart boldly answers, NO. But did I *seem* to mean it? Mr. Richardson says yes. Well then, scratch out of my letter that vile passage, that *seemed* to mean so vile a design; *tell it not in Gath nor proclaim it in the streets of Askalon*, that your child ever wrote it, and believe not that she ever meant it. Whilst I, on the other hand, preserve, and often read over this wholesome admonition, "Rein in, on these important subjects, your imagination." Your wild silly imagination, you foolish girl you! How is poor Mr. Richardson discomfited! He who has been a constant advocate for *the*

reading and writing ladies, how is he, by my sad example, discomfited! But here indeed, dear Sir, you have mixed a sneer with your rebukes that should not have been there, however audacious and peremptory I may have been, whatever sagacity I may have *seemed* to assume, and however contrary my doctrines may have been to truth and reason; however wanting *I* may have been in the characteristic graces of my sex, in *meekness, patience, resignation, submission;* let not, I beseech you, the *reading* and *writing ladies* suffer for this! *I* never was a writing lady till *you* made me one; I am far from being a reading lady; I have read very little; and half of what I have read has been romances and novels and trumpery that did me more harm than good. Let it not then, on my account, be made a doubt whether "our forefathers were not in the right when they bestowed so little attention on the education of girls." Forbid it science! Forbid it justice! that the sex, and the cause of learning, should thus suffer for the faults of *one ignorant girl!* For if I have erred, you should impute is rather to my *ignorance* than knowledge. Miss Carter says, (and she is herself a proof of the truth of her assertion) 'tis certain that every accession of understanding, whether in man or woman, in its natural tendency, leads to the improvement of the heart. Be not en discouraged, good Sir, from your laudable

design of "making young ladies better than some of them think they need to be;" and let me obtain mercy, if not for myself, yet for the *reading and writing ladies;* for such of them at least as are innocent of any design to make "poor parents nothing at all," who never "made SUCH *suppositions, taught* SUCH *doctrines, or asserted* SUCH *privileges for children as could only be defensible, were parents to be* GENERALLY *unnatural and* STUPID, *and children* GENERALLY *wiser and more reasonable than their parents.*"

I have taken more notice of this part of your letter than perhaps I should have done; but indeed the seriousness with which it was introduced, and the pathetic remonstrances in behalf of parents which follow the passage I have cited, made a deep impression on me; how should it do otherwise, coming from you? But yet, my dear Sir, think not that I will say of this, as I did jestingly before of another stroke of yours, that I forgive you; no! I assure you with great sincerity that I most heartily *thank you* for it. And I promise you to consider this, and every other reproof from you, as marks of your regard and good will. Let not then my answering so seriously this part of your letter, deprive me of the privilege of being thus kindly and gently chid for the future; I conjure you do not! Since this is one of the great advantages I selfishly propose to find in your paternal

friendship; and since I shall think you have renounced your child, if ever you renounce the design of correcting her faults, and making her worthy of your esteem.

And now to return to the argument. I have been flattering myself a good while that we differ not very materially with regard even to parental authority. And I think on the subject of forced marriages we are pretty nearly of the same mind. Not one word of what I have said whilst I have Solmes and Clarissa in my view, do you wish me to retract, more than I do retract. But Clarissa's case, you say, stands by itself; "and I beseech you let not any young creatures," proceed you, "imagine themselves entitled to plead her example for *non-compliance*, till they have *her reasons*; to wit, an *absolute aversion*, an *utter dissimilitude of mind and manners*, to *justify* that aversion; oppression and persecutions like hers; and endeavours used by them, in imitation of her, to reconcile herself to her friends, and to move them in her favour antecedent to any rash step taken or thought of." But, dear Sir, will not *less* than an *absolute aversion* be sufficient to give a woman a liberty to refuse an engagement which puts the happiness of her whole life so much in the power of another, that nothing less than a *perfect esteem* should induce her to place so great a trust in his hands? And *whatever* may be the *reason* of a

woman's dislike to a man, if she *does* dislike him, has she not a right to refuse to marry him? For my own part, I think, if ever I marry, I ought to give the man I marry a sincere preference to all other men; and I should think myself at liberty to reject any man to whom I could not give such a preference. The marriage vow ought to be perfectly voluntary. Is it not an act whereby a woman places in a man a power over her of so great consequence to her ease and quiet, that nothing but death, or a dreadful appeal to the laws of the land in the face of the world, can release her from his tyranny, if he should prove a tyrant, or procure her any redress for the greatest of injuries? Surely there needs not an utter dissimilitude of mind and manners to justify a woman in refusing to make a man the lord of her affections, and the director of her will; on the contrary there should be (if happiness or even a tolerable degree of it, is to be hoped for in the marriage state) the nearest similitude of mind and manners that can be met with, between two people who are to live together for life, whose interests are one, and who profess before the altar of God to love each other as themselves. To choose a companion and friend to live with you in the same house, even though you could part at pleasure, would you not be careful to inquire into the manners and sentiments of any person who was proposed to you as

such? How much more then should a sympathy of soul be sought for in the person with whom you are to be so much more closely and strongly connected! Therefore I must insist, that *every* woman, whether of equal prudence with Clarissa, or not, whether the man proposed be *quite* as odious as Solmes, or not, whether she have an absolute aversion to him, or only be *indifferent*, or rather averse to him, whether she be in love with some other, or not, and whether that other be a proper match for her, or not, every woman, I say, has a right to a negative; and is guilty of no sinful disobedience in refusing to marry the man her parents propose, provided she do not marry herself without their consent; since the giving away her person, her fortune, and even her affections, is an action in which her free will is essentially concerned; and, as a rational creature, she must have a right to refuse to shackle her conscience with a vow, if she does not choose it. Now I am not quite clear, from the general tenor of your argument, whether you are willing to allow this in *all* cases; although in the particular case of Clarissa you have so plainly designed her steady refusal as exemplary. Tell me then, dear Sir, are we quite agreed in this point? Remembering always that I allow the parents (if *tolerably good* parents) a negative, will you allow one in *all cases* to the child?

A MATRIMONIAL CREED;

ADDRESSED

BY MISS MULSO

TO

MR. RICHARDSON:

IN CONSEQUENCE OF HIS QUESTIONING HER STRICTLY ON WHAT SHE BELIEVED TO BE THE DUTIES OF THE MARRIED STATE.

MATRIMONIAL CREED.

BEING told one evening that I could not be quite a good girl, whilst I retained some particular notions concerning the behaviour of husbands and wives; being told that I was intoxicated with false sentiments of dignity; that I was proud, rebellious, a little spitfire, &c. I thought it behoved me to examine my own mind on these particulars, to distrust its rectitude, and endeavour to detect those erroneous principles and faulty passions, which could draw on me censures so severe from some of my best friends. Therefore, at the hour of retirement, when silence and solitude left my thoughts free, cool and sedate, and my reason unperplexed by the ambiguities of expression, the mutual misconstructions and exaggerations, the warmth of self-vindication, and the desire of converting others to our own way of thinking, which sometimes embarrass truth, and prevent conviction in argument, I endeavoured to recollect and re-consider my own sentiments on the subject. And that I might do so with more certainty and regularity, I collected them, and set them down in as good order as I could, in the manner of a creed, which, considering the importance of the subject, will not I hope be thought a profanation of the form. If the opinions here set

down shall be found to vary from those I set out with, be it imputed, not to designed evasion, but to the gradual effects which the arguments I have since heard, and the reflections I have made, may have imperceptibly produced in a mind, which, however tenacious, is not disingenuous, and would have acknowledged those effects at the time, had it, at the time, been sensible of them.

N. B. I do not, in the manner of some creed-makers, anathematize all those who differ from me, nor abhor, detest, or abjure their opinions. Nor would I excommunicate from the holy state of matrimony all such as cannot heartily subscribe to the smaller articles of this creed. For if the weightier matters of the law, fidelity, obedience, love, honour, and truth, be fulfilled, the rest may be adjusted without any systems, by time, habit, mutual compliances, and mutual forbearances. And many things may appear necessary to the highest degree of earthly felicity that our imaginations can form, which are by no means essential to produce such a mixed and limited happiness as ought to be the object of our hopes.

I.

I believe that a husband has a divine right to the absolute obedience of his wife, in all cases where the first duties do not interfere: and that, as her appointed ruler and head, he is undoubt-

edly her superior. And I think it probable that the divine institution which gives him this right, and the customs and usages of all nations and ages in this respect, are founded on some natural advantages and superiority of the man, which make the law of obedience a wise, just, and merciful law, with respect to the woman. This I think probable in general, although, in many instances, the contrary is true of individuals, and in many matches, the natural superiority, in all mental excellences, is evidently on the woman's side.

II.

I believe it expedient that every woman should choose for her husband one whom she can heartily and willingly acknowledge her superior, and whose judgment and understanding she can prefer to her own; although in some points it may not be possible for her to adopt his opinions, or be convinced by his reasoning. Nor ought this (which must always be in some measure the case, even between the best paired minds that can be selected from the whole race of mankind) to interrupt or abate their felicity. Since such opinions as are general and speculative, may be retained on both sides without any inconvenience; and as to those which relate to action, the husband's will must ultimately determine, even

though the wife should remain unconvinced; excepting such actions as are in themselves immoral, or which interest the wife's happiness greatly more than that of the husband. I do not know that this latter exception can stand of right, though with a generous man I think it must be allowed.

III.

Notwithstanding this acknowledged superiority of right of command, I believe it highly conducive, and, to delicate minds, absolutely necessary to conjugal happiness, that the husband have such an opinion of his wife's understanding, principles, and integrity of heart, as would induce him to exalt her to the rank of his *first* and *dearest friend*, and to endow her, by his own free gift, with all the privileges, rights, and freedoms of the most perfect friendship.

IV.

In order to preserve this friendship perfect and entire, I believe it necessary that all such inequality and subjection as must check and restrain that unbounded confidence and frankness which are the essence of friendship, be laid aside or suffered to sleep, till such time as the woman shall shew herself unworthy of the high title of friend, with which her husband had honoured her, and shall

return to the common state of wives; for though she has, by his marriage vow, a right to his love and kindness, it is not so with respect to his friendship, which is a free and voluntary gift, or conditional loan, and may be withdrawn without breach of vows, according to his discretion and her merits. Many an honest woman, who would make a faithful and obedient wife, is utterly unqualified to be a friend in the highest sense of the word: and many marriages are tolerable easy, if not happy, where friendship was never once thought of, either in the making, or in the course of the union.

V.

As the elegant pleasures of life, between persons of taste and sentiment, must depend, in a great measure, on delicacies which enter not into the scheme of common minds, I believe it conducive to the preservation of this finer relish of happiness, that a certain kind and degree of respect, politeness, or complaisance, (whichever of those words may best express the idea) such as may consist with the greatest intimacy, and kindness, be mutually kept up, even in this most intimate of unions.

VI.

I believe that love must always necessarily inspire a constant desire of pleasing and obliging,

which cannot fail of manifesting itself on both sides, if not restrained by some other principle. Let not the husband then restrain these amiable effects of love, by an overweening opinion of superiority, or jealousy of power, nor the wife, by false dignity, or female pride; but let both, in those actions which are suited to the sex and situation of each, testify their mutual preference of each other's happiness to their own, in the smallest as well as in the greatest occurrences of life.

VII.

I cannot help believing that the man who wishes to preserve the approbation of his wife's taste as well as judgment, and to continue the object of her fondest admiration, as well as esteem, ought not to let her see a total change of those manners which perhaps first attracted her fancy; that he ought not at once to exchange the engaging assiduities of the lover, for the bluntness of command, or the negligence of security. An adoring, creeping, flattering, servile lover, is a contemptible animal, or worse, an artful villain: but the sincere and reasonable lover, preserved in the husband, must appear, in the eyes of a wife, the most amiable of characters. She, on her part, freed from the restraints of maiden punctilio, must naturally be delighted with every proper occasion of shew-

ing her grateful attention and observant tenderness; but by the word proper, I would except against over officiousness and parade of affection, in company, and all such services as are not suited to her sex, or agreeable to the customs of the world. These exceptions allowed, I repeat that she cannot too freely indulge that desire of obliging, which is the inseparable attendant and effect of true love, and which must generally (one would think always) prevent, in happy marriages, the necessity of command.

I cannot, on self-examination, convince myself that any of the above sentiments are founded in pride, or in aversion to being governed, or in jealousy of power. I would not marry a man, upon whose generosity I could not absolutely depend, and whose will and wishes would not be mine as soon as known. I have never yet been the mistress of myself, nor ever wished to be so; for I am convinced that it is generally a happiness, and often a relief to have some person to determine for us, either to point out our duty, or direct our choice. If I know myself in this respect, I should be a loyal subject, but a rebellious slave.

I have also examined myself on the article of tenaciousness, imputed to me so often by Mr. Richardson, and some others of my good friends, who probably know me better than I do myself. I am very far from denying the charge, which I

think is very likely to be true, but what I wish is, to find the cause of this defect, and the remedy. That I am not insincere and disingenuous, I can boldly and safely determine; and if I felt myself convinced, I am certain I could own it freely. Whether my understanding or temper be in fault, I cannot tell. Perhaps I am still tenaciously persisting in the wrong, but I do not find that I *can*, from any argument I have yet heard, retract from, or concede any of the opinions contained in

This Paper.

A PRAYER

FOUND IN MRS. CHAPONE'S HAND-WRITING AFTER HER DEATH.

A PRAYER.

FOUND IN MRS. CHAPONE'S HAND-WRITING AFTER HER DEATH.

O GRACIOUS Father of the universe! behold thy creature humbly imploring thy forgiveness of her numerous past trangressions, and thy compassion for her present faulty dispositions, and her defects in all those virtues that must raise her to a better condition. Turn not from me, O my God, the light of thy countenance, nor take from me the blessed influence of thy spirit! enlighten my understanding; strengthen my faith; purify and invigorate the desires of my heart towards that which is good. Save and deliver me from evil, O Lord God most holy! most beneficent and merciful Creator! consign me not to destruction; cast me not out from thy presence and the society of good spirits, but grant me all the assistance I stand in need of, to become what I ought to be, and to make the best use of that short period of life, which may still remain for me in this world, after all the time I have wasted or misemployed. Thou knowest all my weaknesses and wants, and all the infirmities of my soul and body. Help me O my Father to obey thee and to love thee as I ought. Raise my dull spirit to such true reverence and adoration, such gratitude for thy past benefits, and such hope in thy future mercies, as

may best recommend the humble homage of my prayers and thanksgivings. And grant that the time may come when my heart shall be as sincere and warm in these affections as my frail nature is capable of. Imperfect as they are, may thy goodness however accept them, and, through the merits and mediation of my blessed redeemer, bring me to that state where I shall be good and happy, and praise thy glorious name for ever and ever. Amen!

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

LETTER I.

TO MR. BURROWS.

Brightwell, Sept. 22, 1764.

So you are really returned to sin and sea-coal, and have lost this beautiful autumn weather, merely out of obstinacy! Noble perseverance! I am determined not to pity you, though you should be suffocating, whilst I have been enjoying some of the sweetest scenes of Berkshire. But poor *Mrs.* Burrows I *do* pity; for I am persuaded you forced her to follow you to town. Yes, Mr. Burrows, you *forced** her. "A parlous shot out of an elder gun," is your smart Dialogue indeed! like the comedy of The Clouds, it metamorphoses the most respectable characters into the most ridiculous; which ought in my opinion to be a hanging matter; and were I an absolute queen, I don't know whether I should not make you the first example, though when I had done so, I should lie upon the ground tearing my hair like old Queen Bess, when she had executed Essex. You certainly rely most audaciously on my partiality for you, or you could never dare to use my friends as you do before my face. I say friends, because Mrs. —— gave me that honourable title in the beginning of our acquaintance, when I dined in

* Alluding to a passage in The Dialogue.

the dressing-room with her; that it has not since been repeated, I take to be wholly owing to the want of a refreshing ode, or well-turned panegyric on my part, which no doubt was what she had a right to expect, and *you* have a great deal to answer for on that score, who keep my genius down continually, by throwing cold water on its dying embers, and terrify my poor Muse as much as Churchill does that of Gray. The woful example of esprits and poetesses of much higher rank, torn to pieces by your unmerciful wit, whose mangled limbs lie scattered before your cave, has so intimidated me, that I could not make a couplet to have a drink of nectar out of Ossian's shell. Notwithstanding this dreadful disadvantage, the very last letter from Mrs. C. contains a kind message from Mrs. L. with hopes of some time seeing me at ——. There friendship breathes in every vale, and conjugal love sighs through the groves. Wit sparkles in every stream, and poetry enamels every lawn with flowers that never fade. There I hope to shake off the rust I have contracted in your acquaintance, and regain some elegance of sentiment, and brilliancy of imagination.

Pray tell me about Mrs. Barker. I have never heard a syllable from her since I left Chelsea, and fear she did not receive a letter I sent her by the penny-post, the day before I set out from thence.

I find she has been comforting poor Miss Betty Palmer, whom I pity most heartily, and could not help feeling as if I had lost something, when I heard of the death of her good sister, though I so long expected it, and had so small an acquaintance with her; but she had a kindness for me, and I do love to be loved by good people, and reckon the loss of one of them as a sensible diminution of my enjoyments. If you see Mrs. Barker, do remind her of one Mrs. Chapone, whom for a week or two she professed a friendship for; but don't let her fancy me in earnest displeased with her silence, for that would be contrary to articles.

My kindest love to dear Mrs. Burrows. I don't know how *you* find it, but *I* love her more this year than the last, and so on. Adieu, my dear Mr. Burrows; I am ever your most faithful and obliged friend,

H. CHAPONE.

LETTER II.

TO ——

Chelsea, July 28, 1768.

I AM very glad you are so well entertained by Lady Hervey. I suppose in the winter you will be admitted to her dinners of *six*, (for she never has more at a time,) all chosen esprits; for which number I hear her table is every day prepared.

Don't, however, let her make an infidel or a French woman of you, for she is as terrible and dangerous as the monsters that stand on the French shore. I went some time ago to the Moravian house in Chelsea, where I fell in love with a Moravian lady, a Swiss by birth; her husband (an Englishman) went to Switzerland to find a wife, in consequence of a *dream* which directed him to this lady, whom he married thereupon. She perverted him to the Moravian religion, and he became secretary to Count Zirzindorff. We had about an hour's conversation with her, (for she is an old acquaintance of Mr. B——'s, with whom I went merely with a view to see the house) I never in my life was better entertained, nor ever took so high an opinion of any body in so short a time. She has travelled over Europe, is very polite and sensible, has an air of unaffected sanctity, and though old, and drest with the plainness of a quaker, has the happiest mixture of dignity and simplicity I ever saw. I long to be better acquainted with her, though possibly she might make a Moravian of me, for I am already so far converted, as to disbelieve half the imputations laid on that sect, particularly that of licentiousness; for nothing could be more artlessly pure, modest, and holy, than the manners and sentiments of this woman. This is the only *adventure* I have to entertain you with, in return for

your *narrative*. The rest of my time has passed merely in eating, sleeping, and quadrille; but if I have been a comfort to my aunt, I account it better spent than with *esprits* and philosophers.

LETTER III.

TO MR. BURROWS.—1773.

I HAVE just received from Miss ———, the welcome news of your being safely landed, and I feel so very glad of it, that it has put me into a kind complying humour, and inclined me to indulge your unreasonable demand of hearing *first* from me. To be sure nothing can be more *contre les regles*, and the more so as I have nothing in the world to tell you, and you have so much to tell me; however, I am so desirous of hearing from you, that I agree to your terms, however unreasonable. I wish you may be in a voluminous vein; I promise to preserve your letters, and you shall have them framed and glazed when you return, if you choose it; so that you will but tell me about every thing and every body you meet with. As you have lately got so good a hand at panegyric, I expect pictures at whole length of the admirable friends you are with; views of their country seat, studies from nature of every romantic scene in the country, and studies of man from every group you get amongst in Dublin;

particularly I desire your serious opinion, whether an Irish man or woman does in any particular or degree differ from an English one, for I have not yet settled my opinion about the national character, so much talked about; especially whose laws and customs being much alike, the difference is to arise from the climate; and this doubt has always much abated my curiosity with regard to neighbouring nations, I might say all the European nations, amongst whom I should not expect to find variety enough to compensate the trouble of going so far to look into them. I believe you have played us this trick of leaving our island on purpose to make us feel your importance; for my part, though I should not enjoy more of your company if you were at Hadley than I do now, yet the idea of the sea rolling between us, is unaccountably disagreeable to me. I feel sincere commisseration for Mrs. Burrows and your sisters, who by their own account seem in danger of actually dying of ennui.

I, who live upon the love of my friends, can soon surfeit on the most delicate feasts of mutual flattery, which seems to me to be too much the kind of intercourse among my new acquaintances, and in which they will find me terribly deficient, and consequently terribly insipid. Our jarring society, as Mrs. B. calls it, is much more suited to my nature, and nothing can ever make me

amends for that luxurious ease and security in the kindness of all around me, which enables me to wrangle, abuse, and dispute, till I am black in the face, without the least apprehension of any harm ensuing; but life would be too happy if I were always to spend it with my brother and your family. 'Tis fit I should sometimes take up with what is less to my mind. What profanation, would some folks say, and how unworthy of the lot assigned me! Well, I shall try it, but I shall not be disappointed if I should never renew it, nor ever be wished for again in the same parties.

LETTER IV.

TO ——

December, 1775.

You were very good, my dearest friend, in cheering my exile with such a kind and entertaining letter; indeed nothing can be more melancholy than my state here, as I have not the comfort of seeing my poor aunt mend at all. We have at last prevailed to send for Sir Noah Thomas, and before I seal this, I hope he will have been here and have given us some prospect of amendment. I have no thoughts of leaving her in her present condition, which requires the attention of a friend, and she has no one near her at all qualified for nursing. I am sure she has the

justest claim to the best I can do, and she takes so kindly my stay, that it makes my duty satisfactory to myself. Yet I cannot help hankering after London at present, where I have left so many persons whose company I delight in; Mrs. Barbauld in particular I regret, as the opportunities of cultivating her acquaintance are so scarce and valuable. I am very glad to find you improve your opportunities so well, for I entirely agree with you in your idea of her character, and think her a prize not to be neglected. I wish you would institute a correspondence with her, for, notwithstanding the cold caution which age brings upon me every day, I cannot help being strongly inclined, on the evidence before me, to give her credit for all those qualities of the heart and temper, which must be joined to her great understanding, to make her worthy of your friendship. I regret particularly the snug day at my brother's, for as to your fandango, I would not have given a rush for it, unless for the *credit* of having made one in such a brilliant assembly.

Our dear Miss S. (who is a treasure that has been tried seven times in the fire) is another subject of regret to me at present. You give me great pleasure in the hope of having gained ground in her affection, for she has long been in possession of a very high rank in my esteem.

Have you seen my brother John's dream?

Sleeping or waking he is a diverting animal. Very pleasant is his company to me, and sad the separation in which we live.

LETTER V.

TO ——

May, 1776.

I FEEL already a great desire to converse with you, my dearest friend, and to know how you all do, and how you relish the chase in these bitter north-east winds. You, on your part, are afraid that I am laid up after my *fête champêtre*, and will be glad to hear that though my cold is not the better, I have escaped hitherto with only grumbling in teeth and jaws, and have been able to dine at Lord Bateman's to-day. But first of the first: alas! all human schemes end in disappointments. What must have been Mr. B——'s, when after inviting all the people of quality and fashion he could lay his hands on, to the finest entertainment they ever had, or ever could partake of; when, after having his grass cut, and preparing Arcadian haymakers in uniforms to make hay on his lawn, with a most elegant breakfast *al fresco*, set out in an elegant tent, &c. when the rooms, the staircase, and every part of the house was crowded with fine people, to hear Mrs. Sheridan, Miss Fitzpatrick, and others, perform the oratorio of Ruth; lo!

Mrs. Sheridan miscarried and could not come; Miss Fitzpatrick was capricious and would not come; Miss Louisa Harris took fright and did not come; and if there were more misses, they either did not come, or did not sing (except Miss Fisher, who gave us two Italian songs;) so the oratorio fell to the ground; the band were all in distress and confusion; and we had only instrumental music after long pauses and consultations (excepting the aforesaid songs of Miss Fisher, and two base ones by Mr. Allot). The north-east wind made it impossible to walk between the acts, or to breakfast *al fresco*. The poor haymakers were forced to put on cloaks, and the ladies to peep at them from the windows. But now to turn the best end of the perspective. I went with Mrs. Ogle and Mrs. Harris; got good places at a due distance from door and window; saw Dutchess of Devonshire, Dutchess of Ancaster, Lady Archer, Mrs. Hodges, and a hundred more capitals; and such variety of heads and hats as amused me much. Mr. Giardini led the band, and gave us some concertos. Mr. Park, an excellent hautbois, gave me pleasure, and then we had a *prince* to play thorough bass on the harpsichord. Lady Edgecombe accompanied Miss Fisher's first song. After the first act we went down to an elegant breakfast in an elegant room below; returned up stairs to the second act, and had again the luck to get good places, which, considering the case of

many ladies, who stood upon chairs, or were jammed in the door-way, was a great piece of good fortune; got to the coach in less than an hour after it was over; went to dinner at the bishop's, and came home safe in the evening, and am not laid up. But alas! my principal hope miscarried; and for the rest, it might have been well enough if one had expected no better.

LETTER VI.

TO ——

May, 1776.

I WENT last night with Mrs. Boscawen to Mr. Cole's, where we passed an agreeable evening He and Mr. Baker had a lively debate upon Mr. Jennyn's book, which is every where the subject of conversation. I find to my surprise that the orthodox prize it highly. I had almost got into a scrape with my uncle for saying I feared it would do more harm than good. I think with you that it is written in a very pleasing and interesting manner. What he says of the excellence of our saviour's character and precepts, as a proof of christianity, I much approve, for it certainly is one of the strongest proofs we can have; but I think he misrepresents and outrées some of the moral precepts, as well as several of the doctrines of christianity, to the great injury of his cause.

His granting to the infidels that all the business of this world is incompatible with christianity, and that the precepts of Christ do not regard, and are even *adverse* to public *utility* and *happiness*, was the subject on which his friend Cole (though a great admirer, in general, of the book) made strictures, and Baker defended. I think Jennyns has confounded the subject like Mandeville, by changing the terms of his proposition upon us, and giving us sometimes *wealth*, *power*, &c. for utility and happiness. That the laws of God must conduce to public utility and happiness, cannot be denied without impiety. The true interests of both worlds must be the same, for there is no way to either but virtue. Wealth and power may be otherwise attained, but then they are neither useful nor happy. He loves to encounter giants (as appears from his origin of evil), yet I think he is but a pigmy reasoner. What says Mr. B—— to the book? or is he too good-natured to read it?

LETTER VII.

TO ——

Farnham Castle, August 22, 1776.

Yes, my dearest —— "simple as I sit here," I have been in company with the king and queen; have enjoyed "the sweet aspect of princes;" been complimented over and over by royal lips

about my book; been exhorted to write more; my niece inquired about; my place of abode; my address in London asked; and in short "as great honours done me as shall be desired, look you, in a summer's day." But I was still more gratified by the cordial esteem and kindness testified to my dear uncle and aunt by their royal guests, and by the joy which beamed in their countenances, and will gladden their hearts as often as they recollect this visit. I have given the particulars in detail to my brother, who will satisfy your curiosity more completely than I can now do, having several letters on my hands; besides that one cannot repeat exactly the same things to persons who are so likely to *confer notes*; therefore you must be contented to be told in general that the whole went off as happily as was possible; that nothing could exceed the good humour, the ease, the kindness, I may say the *friendliness* of the royal guests, nor the grateful pleasure of their hosts. The queen has the most engaging manners you can conceive, and a countenance so overflowing with graciousness and benignity, that it is impossible to see her without loving her. Her readiness in starting conversation, and the address with which she introduced a thousand obliging and polite things, were really in a degree that amazed me. My brother will tell you in what strong terms she mentioned the

king's affection for the Bishop of W——, and the delight he had in the visit, and in seeing him the possessor of this charming place, &c. The king on his part forgot nothing that could gratify the bishop and Mrs. Thomas, and in his conversation with Mr. B——, during a walk in the park, remembered every individual of the family, and inquired minutely into their situation; what the bishop had done for them, &c. amongst these were the Mulsos, whom he seemed to know a good deal about, and inquired more. He remembered me as Miss Mulso, but did not before know that my name was now Chapone, and the queen (before I appeared) expressed her surprise to find that the author of the letters she admired was the bishop's niece. She said she had asked several people, but never could learn who Mrs. Chapone was. This accounts for her having never mentioned the book to the bishop, which I had rather wondered at, having been told by Dr. M. that she liked it and had read it more than once (which she herself confirmed here). Your letter arrived here on Sunday, at which time Mrs. Thomas's spirits were so much agitated, by the expectation of this visit, that she wanted to escape away to W——, if the bishop would have permitted it. When I read her what you said about it, she said she should be happy and contented if she could acquit herself *half* as well as Mrs. B—— did

at M——; however her spirits rose with the occasion, and all her fears vanished, when she found herself addressed with so much kindness and ease, and sprightliness, for the visit was as cheerful a one as ever passed, and I believe nobody of less rank could have made a first visit so lively. In truth, my aunt acquitted herself to admiration, and betrayed not the least embarrassment; her respect, and that of the bishop, was accompanied by such marks of the real affection which glowed in their hearts, that it produced all that the most refined politeness aims at, and more than it ever attains when it is artificial. I am certain the queen was much more pleased with my aunt than she expected to be with an old lady, whom she had never seen at court, and whom, therefore, she probably considered as long disused to the world. She carried on the conversations; the queen began very agreeably, and introduced some polite compliments with uncommon happiness. The people who lined the streets were a good deal disappointed at the queen's appearance, whom they expected to see ride along with her crown upon her head, and were not a little surprised to see her with a black hat, and a plain blue great coat. The little boys (Mr. B's sons) were made very happy in the notice taken of them, which was exceedingly good-natured; the king called the youngest *the counsellor*, (a

name the bishop gives him), and admired his discretion in refraining from laughing when he had so much mind to it. He had them close to him all the time. The queen told us a pretty story of Prince Ernest, (who I believe is about four years old): walking on Windsor Terrace with the rest, the mob pressed upon him, and he took off his hat and said, "I should be obliged to you if you would be so good as not to push me so much;" this will do to tell your little folks, though they do not want a lesson of civility.

These honours to the bishop in his old age are the more gratifying to him, as his love for the king is the strongest passion of his soul.

LETTER VIII.

TO ——

Winchester, November 7, 1776.

I HAVE read some of Dr. Powel's sermons; he seems to treat the subject liberally, yet not without a mixture of sophistry: that on subscription to articles, is miserably unfair I am tired of reading and thinking, and propose to sit quiet in darkness till it please God to bring me into the regions of light. I trust I shall never lose sight of him amidst the mists of doubts and ignorance, and for the rest, the same resignation is due to his will on the subjects of intellectual wants as of

bodily ones. I have got into the first volume of *Histoire Philosophique, & du Commerce des Indes.* French philosophy is surely the most impertinent thing in the world; nothing makes me so sick. This fine moralist is enraptured with a sect of the Japanese, who make it a part of their religious acts to visit some courtisannes who live close to the Temple on purpose to be at hand, and he goes off in a rhapsody of some pages on the blessedness and holiness of such acts, which he opposes to the rigours of celibacy in the Roman Catholic religion, forgetting that none of the purposes of society are answered by casual visits to courtisans, and that nature, who made marriages for birds, and for every creature whose young stands in need of the assistance of both parents, must have meant that the parents of the human offspring should be united for life, since it stands in need of their protection for twenty years. I think I shall not proceed far in the work, which is very voluminous. I can hardly depend on any information from such an author. Pray let me know what your brother thinks of the book.

LETTER IX.

TO ——

Farnham Castle, August 20, 1778.

My dearest friend,

I RECEIVED your most comfortable large packet yesterday, and in return for the many

agreeable things it contains, I have wherewith to fill as large a sheet if I could but get time to write it in; for we have had great doings here, and though it cannot have quite the zest of the first royal visit, yet it may do well enough *recbauffé*, as it will be garnished with many new circumstances. All I fear is, that my brother, to whom I have already sent the account, will communicate it at Hadley before this arrives. However, I must run the risk of that, and tell it in much the same manner over again; for I know that you will like to hear every little circumstance, particularly such as relate to the least important person of the company, myself. Mr. Buller went to Windsor on Saturday, saw the king, who inquired much about the bishop, and hearing that he would be eighty-two the next Monday—"Then," said he, "I will go and wish him joy." "And I," said the queen, "will go too." Mr. B. then dropped a hint of the additional pleasure it would give the bishop if he could see the princes. "*That*," said the king, "requires contrivance, but if I can manage it we will *all* go." Mr. Buller sent an express with this news on Sunday, and returned himself after we were all in bed. The next morning all things were prepared, and all drest and ready against the hour, and a little after eleven came the king and queen in their phaeton, three coaches and six, and one coach and four,

with a large retinue of servants. The company were

Their Majesties,	Duke of Montague,
Prince of Wales,	Bishop of Lichfield,
Prince Frederick,	Col. Hotham,
Prince William,	General de Bude,
Princess Royal,	Col. Ramsden,
Princess Augusta,	Rev. Mr. Arnold,
Lady Weymouth,	Col. Lake,
Lady Charlotte Finch,	Mr. Light,
	Mr. Smelt.

They were all conducted into the great drawing-room by Mr. and Mrs. Buller, where after paying their compliments to the Bishop and Mrs. T——, those of the first column remained there to breakfast; those of the second column left the room, and were led by Mrs. T—— to the dressing-room, where Mrs. —— and I were, and where I made tea for them, but I suppose you will disdain the little annals of our table, which Mr. B— calls high life below stairs; yet I think you will be pleased to hear of Mr. Smelt there, who was the comfort of my life. The Duke of M—— is a very courteous, well-bred man. The bishop looked good humoured but did not open. After our breakfast was over, as well as that of the upper house, the royal guests came to visit us in the dressing-room. The king sent the princes in to pay their compliments to Mrs. Chapone. Him-

self, he said, was an old acquaintance. Whilst the princes were speaking to me, Mr. Arnold, (sub-preceptor), said "These gentlemen are well acquainted with a certain Ode, prefixed to Mrs. Carter's Epictetus, if you know any thing of it." Afterwards the king came and spoke to us, and the queen led the princess royal to me, saying, "This is a young lady, who, I hope, has profited much by your instructions. She has read them more than once, and will read them oftener," and the princess assented to the praise which followed, with a very modest air. She has a sweet countenance, and simple, unaffected manners. I was pleased with all the princes, but particularly with Prince William, who is but thirteen, and little of his age, but so sensible and engaging, that he won the bishop's heart, to whom he particularly attached himself, and would stay with him while all the rest ran about the house. His conversation was surprisingly manly and clever for his age. Yet with the young Bullers he was quite the boy, and said to John Buller, by way of encouraging him to talk to him, "Come, we are both boys, you know." All of them shewed affectionate respect to the bishop; the Prince of Wales pressed his hand so hard that he hurt it. As to their Majesties, they were all graciousness, as you will suppose, and the king seemed in the highest spirits.

Mrs. Thomas acquitted herself extremely well, and among other pretty compliments, she thought of bringing Snip, in the cabriole, to the garden door, to pay his respects to his mistress; and, the crowd intercepting him, he was taken out of the carriage and led into the garden. Mrs. B.'s two girls were here, and the eldest son, and great notice was taken of them all. The youngest girl (a comical natural little creature, between eight and nine) says, she thinks it hard the princes may not marry who they please; and seems not without hopes, that if it were not for this restriction, the Prince of Wales might prove a lover of her's.

This visit acted as a cordial upon the bishop, and enlivened his spirits for some time. Indeed the affection and tender consideration the king shews him, cannot but be the highest gratification to him, whose passionate fondness for his royal pupil "passes the love of women."

LETTER X.

TO ——

A THOUSAND thanks to you, my dearest friend, for your most kind and entertaining letter, which made me a partaker of your woodland delights without the fatigues that attended them. As my mind is rather more active than my body, I accompanied you with the greatest alacrity all over the

chase, enjoyed the tea, which my brother says is the essence of pleasure in all parties of women, listened with rapture to the song, which was so well suited to the scene, and was particularly struck with the adventure of the boarding-school and Mrs. Venel. Such a surprise is the highest gratification at Maria's age, when the imagination is so apt and capable to the impression of pleasing wonder. I have always thought that the very contrary of that maxim, which Pope gives us in "the very words of Creech," is true; and that,

> "To *admire*, is all the art I know,
> "To make men happy and to keep them so."

When use and experience prevent our being surprised at any thing, and when, by comparing new things with old, we become difficult to be pleased, we seem to have lost the chief means of being happy, and our enjoyments become flat and insipid; this is one of the great disadvantages of age, which I strive to postpone as much as possible. But I find every outward object is so much indebted to the imagination, that as that decays every thing fades. Mine will grow old apace in my present situation, so different from your rural sports and sprightly parties; however, my health seems better suited to this state of insipidity, than to livelier scenes, which set my mind and body more at variance.

LETTER XI.

TO ——

1780.

As to my hoity toity scheme, I believe it will be performed with as much ease and safety as all your long journeys and voyages generally are; for it will be all done in my mind, which is much more excursive than my body. The ——s were here yesterday, and were very agreeable, though somewhat out of spirits on account of the death of their friend, Dr. ——, which happened the day before. I was much pleased to observe little Charlotte, whilst her father described an affecting instance of Dr. ——'s fondness for his little girl in his last hours, holding down her head, and playing with a spoon, to conceal the tears which gushed into her eyes, and which she winked away before she lifted up her face. This made her mother's flow apace, though she took no notice of the child's emotion.

When sensibility breaks forth in children in this manner, it is a most engaging sign, and I was pleased to find the parents were judicious enough to let it pass as if unobserved.

Poor Mrs. E. has my sincere compassion and esteem. I am sure I should be happy to contribute in the least to her comfort; and, if you think

the book you mention would be useful, I beg you would lend it her; but as it is the bishop's, which I took away without leave, I should be glad you would give a hint of more care than an unbound book would otherwise be entitled to. As I think there are many good and strong proofs of a future state from natural reason, I rather fear hurting the cause by such bad arguments as are some of Baxter's; however, as the subject is interesting, it will, at least, employ her thoughts, and divert them from the object of her sorrow. Whatever doubts may assault us, my dear friend, let us hold fast, without wavering, the blessed hope of everlasting life! Our having such a hope is, I trust, a kind of promise, since we could not have had such a hope, nor such an idea, but from that Being who has it in his power to fulfil it. Greater goodness than is in him, we should strive in vain to imagine; if, therefore, it is not inconsistent with his justice, his goodness will give us abundantly more than we can ask or think. He will not destroy his creatures, unless they are incorrigibly bad; he will use his power to give life and happiness, not to destroy. Of all this I feel so strong and intimate a persuasion, that I would not part with it for all this world could give. May it support us in the hour of death; without it what would have become of me when the heaviest stroke my nature could sustain fell upon me?

LETTER XII.

TO MRS. CARTER.

Pall Mall, June 15th.

MANY thanks, my dear Mrs. Carter, for your pleasant though small letter, and for the more early intelligence you were so kind as to send me by Lady Hesketh, which gave me great satisfaction, for your state of health, before you left London, was very uncomfortable.

When you have more complaints than belong to you, I do not like it at all, for the old standards are quite sufficient; but I rejoiced to find that the journey and the change of air had such salutary effects. If the sea warms and softens the air, you are much better situated than we in London, where it is cold as winter, and blights and rheumatisms seem hovering round us. Though I have been, as you say, so *fine* a lady as to have a little musical party, (an advantage I am glad to make of my present situation), yet I cannot boast of having been quite Herculean. The weather, like "a foul fiend, bites me by the back," and gives me more pains than I will trouble you with a catalogue of: however, as I was not many days quite laid up, and am now better, I have reason to be thankful. Miss Burney could not join my party on the third, being busied with prepara-

tions for the fourth; but she made rich amends on the Friday following, when I enjoyed her company infinitely more by having nobody to share it with me but Mr. and Mrs. Pepys. I never saw her so delightful, nor in so good health and spirits. Mr. Pepys and she played into each other's hands like partners long used to each other; and we parted at eleven, with great regret on all sides. How seldom is it that one gets such a treat of conversation. I find I can still enjoy it when in perfection, as I do poetry, though age seems to make me more nice and fastidious in both, and I am seldomer pleased than perhaps I ought to be. No doubt the inability to please in society is no small cause of this, but thus one reconciles oneself by degrees to the days in which we shall say, "I have no pleasure in them."

I have just finished Rosina, which I think you recommended, and in which I find much that pleases me, and a good deal that puts me out of patience. The part of Nettleby seems written only to exercise that virtue, and both that and Richard are terribly *outrée* and disgusting. The character of the heroine, of her parents, and of Mrs. Fitzosborn, are charming, and I think finely kept up. Tudor comes upon you very surprisingly, and the puzzle of who and what he can be, is amusing. Spencer is out of all rule, being of no use but to bring in the author's fragments of poetry.

They are pretty enough, but the eagerness of curiosity is scarce willing to give them a hearing. I fled to this book to relieve my imagination from the horrors imprest on it by Dr. Moore's Journal. And yet it is said he softens those horrors to the prejudice of truth. Indeed I do not know that he tells any thing we had not heard before, and with as many or more shocking circumstances; but then I had always comforted myself by allowing for exaggeration. But such a regular detail, by an eye witness, and one who set out on the popular side, drives one from that shelter, and forces on one the dreadful conviction that Fancy cannot paint any thing worse than our poor fellow-creatures are capable of acting when the divine grace is withdrawn from them; a conviction that makes one's heart shrink, and one's blood curdle.

LETTER XIII.

TO MRS. E. CARTER.

Carlisle street, 27th June.

I AM very glad to find, that in spite of your old enemy, the headach, you retain your strength and hardihood, and can trot to Eastrey so manfully, and defy wind and weather. For my part, who shrink at a cold blast, and relax like a rope at a damp one, I have not thriven much in the cold rains. My shortness of breath, and some other

of my troublesome companions, seem to take advantage and grow upon me in my old age, "but yet hope which travels on, nor quits us when we die," tells me I shall be better in the country, if the sky is more favourable. I have at last seen the strange, but beautiful poem you seemed so charmed with. I am quite provoked at Dr. Darwin for the choice of his subject, for surely his poetical powers are very great, and his numbers uncommonly charming; but did ever any man require one to play with one's fancy at such a rate as this? for the loves of plants; the amours of a rose with a lily! I am willing and agreeable to allow poets all reasonable vagaries, but to personify stamens and pistils; to make sighing swains of the first, and stately or coquettish nymphs of the last, is too much for patience. The fine similies and episodes he brings in please me much; but then one must forget how they are brought in, otherwise the most pathetic becomes ludicrous.

I have not yet seen Mrs. Piozzi's travels, but am told they are very entertaining, and exactly like her conversation. I shall get them and read them soon. I have had sent me some sonnets by a Rev. Mr Bowles, which have a good deal of merit; indeed I think some of them beautiful. I suppose it is because Petrarch was so sad, that all sonnet writers affect such constant plaintive-

ness. When one reads many of them at a sitting, it is like hearing many tunes all in one key, and that a flat one. This is my only objection to Mrs. Smith's elegant collection, which you have already seen. My poor friend, Mrs. Burrows, is laid up with a pretty fierce fit of the gout. She and Mrs. A. Burrows desired to be kindly remembered to you. My brother grumbled and said, "Humph! not a word to me." "You," said I, "why you are but a *man!* what does the fellow mean?" I have finished all Gibbon's six volumes this year. The last has nearly distracted my head. Surely he has a bad method of arranging his materials, by which, as well as by his language, he seems to take delight in puzzling and perplexing one. It is a pity that a man who has taken such wonderful pains for the information of mankind, should have contrived to make his work such as I fear will do much more harm than good. Not but that I love him, for all his severities on superstition and priestly tyranny (which I hate), if he had but taken care sufficiently to keep them distinct from true religion; but his great sin lies in wilfully confounding them.

LETTER XIV.

TO MRS. CARTER.

Francis street, July 3.

It was mortifying, indeed, my dear Mrs. Carter, to part for the summer without a personal adieu, after having so seldom met whilst you were in town; but we were both too well acquainted with each other's infirmities, to attribute it to any other cause than inability. If we have not new bodies by that time, I hope our old ones, next winter, will be more favourable to our enjoying each other's society.

I trust you have been much better in the country, and in your own comfortable house, with servants to take care of you. I can scarce bear to think of your being ill in town, in those lodgings, without a maid of your own.

I am going, on Saturday, to breathe a purer air than that in which I have been suffocating for some time past. Indeed the heat, and the various pestiferous particles that mix with the air here, (from brick-kilns, forges, sewers, &c.) have been too much for me, and made me so idle, and faint, and good-for-nothing, that I could not bring myself to write a letter that I could possibly avoid. But now that I am going farther, to lands of double postage, my conscience forces me to sit down

in the hottest of hot days, to tell you I wish to hear that you have enjoyed cool breezes, fraught with health, and healing in their wings.

I must not forget to enumerate my comforts, as well as my discomforts, and I have for three weeks of the last month been highly gratified by having my beloved niece my guest. I happily got a room for her in this house, and enjoyed her society more than for her sake I wished; for I should have been glad if more of her friends had been in town who could have *chaperoned* her to a few more amusements. But she was very contented, for as she came upon business, whatever pleasure she got was clear gains. Her company helped me to support the *miseries* of *rejoicing*, which were really very great, notwithstanding the real joy I partook in Lord Howe's victory. I would willingly have given up one night's rest, but three was hard upon me; and the more so as I suffered a severe fright the first night, when, having heard not a word about rejoicing before I went to bed, I was waked at two o'clock by the most violent knocking, which fully persuaded me the house was on fire. My niece and I met on the stairs, *en chemise*, and by degrees learnt the truth, and saved our windows by hurrying up all the candles we could find. The two following nights we were regularly illuminated; and I, who can trust nobody where fire is to be feared, watched—and

started every moment at cannon, guns, pistols, squibs, and crackers, to the no small torment of my unfortunate nerves. As we gave so warm and hearty a welcome to good fortune, she should not have turned her back upon us so soon; for now we are as extreme in dismay, as before in joy. But the steady hand of Providence will, I trust, turn all to good.

I have seen nothing of Mrs. Wolstonecroft's, except her Rights of Women; in which I discerned some strong sense, amidst many absurdities, improprieties, and odious indelicacies. The desire of distinction is, I believe, the grand spring that sets so many pens at work, to shake and overturn every principle of order and happiness, and makes so many foolish people depart from the good they have been taught, to become their disciples, and affect a libertinism which their hearts disavow. Humility is indeed our great preservative: Mrs. Wolstonecroft is so good as to attribute it to *me;* and I have at least enough to be not ashamed of it, and earnestly to wish I had more.

LETTER XV.

TO MRS. CARTER.

St. Maries, Southampton, October 12.

HAVING at last got a frank, I sit down to give you some account of myself during a long silence,

After passing near a month agreeably at Pope's, where I enjoyed the fine weather without being oppressed by it, I returned to town, and baked again till the 18th of August, when I came hither, and finding my friend Mrs. Ogle tolerably well, and her sister Lady Ogle with her, I promised myself considerable enjoyment in the society of such old and valued friends, who have loved me uninterruptedly from their childhood, and whose conversation with me is always *a cœur ouvert*. But my enjoyment lasted but one day, before a letter arrived, which put an end to all pleasure, except that of helping to support my poor friend under a new and heavy affliction. This was the death of her third son (a fine amiable young man about 25) in the West Indies, who fell a victim to that horrible yellow fever, which has made such havoc among our forces. He was aid-de-camp to Sir Charles Grey, and had honourably distinguished himself in the service. He was the favourite of every one of the family, and his behaviour to his mother had particularly endeared him to me. Lady Ogle and I had the task of breaking this news to Mrs. Ogle and the young people. As I know you will feel pain from the idea of my situation at that time, I ought to tell you that it was attended with a degree of satisfaction I cannot express. The behaviour of my saint-like friend was such as raised my admiration more than my

pity, and made me gratefully adore that mercy which proportions its assistance to the wants of mortals, and mixes sweetness in the bitterest cup. To see one of the tenderest of mothers meekly resigned under such a stroke, forgetting her own suffering, in her concern for her daughters, who (as she observed) were "unbroken to affliction;" to see her composedly trying to appease and console them, and sweetly accepting every endeavour of her friends to comfort herself, made me think I had an angel before me rather than a woman. The dean was in the north at that time; his arrival about a week after brought on more distressful scenes. His nerves were sadly shaken by his illness last year, and this blow, which was, I believe, the severest he could feel, made me very apprehensive for the effects on him. His health has been much injured by it, and so has that of my sweet patient friend; but I hope they have now weathered the worst, and that time will heal them both.

My nephew William had been lying inactive at Portsmouth ever since he was made a lieutenant, which he, and even I, poor short-sighted mortals! lamented as a sad disadvantage, and thought it very unfortunate that he could not go with Sir J. Jervis; how have I since rejoiced that he did not! At last with great joy he sailed to join Lord Howe's fleet, and I was doubtful during the last

storm whether he was out at sea, or in Torbay. I have not heard from him since, but by the papers I learn that the fleet was returned to Torbay, and not much injured. I find myself much affected by every heavy gale, and foresee more anxieties in wait for me. But I hope I shall have the grace to keep them under, and to confide my private concerns, as well as those of the public, to the Great Ruler, which is the only comfort one can have at present.

LETTER XVI.

TO MRS. CARTER.

Francis street, June 29.

You were very kind, my dear Mrs. Carter, in so soon indulging me with an account of your safe arrival at Deal, where I flatter myself you found yourself much better than you had been in town for some time. I hope you found Mrs. Pennington well, and had nothing to allay the pleasure of your visit there. You are by this time returned, and your house is, I dare say, so neat that no one could imagine it belonged to one of the literati. Your heart has been satisfied with rain since you wrote, and your myrtles and geraniums have drank their fill. Rain is a blessing I am soon tired of, for the damp hurts my spirits, and makes me ask myself many times in a day—"Fool, what ails

you? you are not ill; you are not miserable; why don't you enjoy yourself?" "Madam, an please you, it rains," says the fool, with which good reason I am forced to sit down satisfied. Whether this same fool (with whom I have many quarrels, and for whom I often feel great contempt) be body or mind, or something between both, I can't tell, but am much inclined to fancy (if it be not heresy) that I perceive, like Cyrus's friend, that I have two souls. Pray tell me what you think of this matter. If it be not so, I should be glad to know *who* the *two* are that so often disturb my rest with their contentions in the night, whilst one of them keeps calling the other "coward! idiot!" and I know not what vile names, for suffering the thoughts of fire, robbers, future contingencies, and past griefs to worry the brain, and make the heart beat. "Dear madam," says fool, "you can't think it's any pleasure to *me* to distress myself with such ideas. I am sure I do not call for them; and if you can help me to any means of getting rid of them, I shall be vastly obliged to you. But I must tell you that your pompously repeating

> 'Cowards die oftentimes before their death,
> The valiant never taste of death but once,'

or that beautiful line, (the sentiment of which I honour as much as you can do) '*Je crains dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre crainte*:' as to all

that it is very fine, but I must tell you my heart beats not a jot the less for it." "Then take a little simple peppermint water, simpleton! and try what that will do;" and so the matter ends for that time.

I own this conclusion of the dispute looks a little as if the interlocutors were no other than the same quarrelsome couple, whose debates you have so cleverly put into verse. I hope they will live more quietly in the country, whither I am going next Wednesday; and I hope the clouds will have poured forth all their treasures by that time, and that I shall find the haymakers very busy round about Pope's.

The storm you mentioned was quite as sublime, but not quite so innocent in this part of the world as with you. However, I *will* say for my poor fool, that she behaves very well in thunder and lightning; for as far as I can guess, it is not so much death that she fears, as pain; and we *both* agree in considering

"The favor'd man by touch etherial slain"

as an object of envy. I hear you were treacherous to me, and have written poetry lately that you have never shewed me; but I was even with you; for I believe I never shewed you an epistle in verse from my brother to me, with the lady's answer, which we old children amused ourselves with in last December. The truth is, you and I

no meetings in private, and scarce any kind, this unfortunate year. I have been a story for Mrs. H. Moore's cheap publications, who I thought must want assistance; but and she has more composers than she knows what to do with; so I should grudge my trouble, were it not that I know I did it with a good intention.

TO MY SISTER CHAPONE.

December 8, 1794.

THE PANGS OF A POET.

SWEET, my dear sister, is the new born thought,
To the rapt mind by vivid fancy brought;
Sudden and sweet the rapid numbers flow,
And with bright tints of flashing genius glow;
The recent verse well satisfied we read.—
But ah! to genius judgment must succeed;
With other eyes the work we now must view;
With sick'ning toil the critic's task pursue;
Line after line, and word by word must weigh,
And find a thousand errors in the lay;
Confusion in the metaphors we spy—
This is too flowery,—and that's too dry;
This thought is natural, but then 'tis trite;
That line is brilliant, and yet not quite right;
The sense is here much weakened for the rhyme,
And the thought deadened that the verse may chime.

Oh! to correct and blot, how hard the toil:
Like the first opening of a stubborn soil,
Stones, weeds, and matted roots arrest the plough,
And shock the labourer's pressing hand. And now
The friend call'd in, reluctant and afraid,
Feels what is ask'd will prove dewelcome aid;
Critic unblest! he wishes not to blame,
But kindly anxious for the author's fame,
Just ventures to object to one flat phrase—
Queries—suggests—submits—[illegible] with praise
Mix[illegible] doubts—not doubting of the whole—
Sure of success—of poetry the soul
Reluctant too the author hears his friend,
On any theme, save only to commend;
Jealous and partial to his child ador'd,
Defends each thought, each image, and each word
[illegible] length by patience or submission brought;
[illegible]'s somewhat now—yields more on cooler
[illegible]ght.
Adopts this emendation—that rejects;
Day after day revises and corrects;—
[illegible] at length, disgusted, and worn out,
[illegible] whole business begins to doubt;
[illegible] longer views it with a parent's eye,
But as a changeling doom'd to infamy,
And with malignant fury casts it by.
Neglected, scorn'd, long time it lies forlorn;
Happy, mean time, it was not burnt or torn.
At length restor'd to notice [illegible] chance,
The author deigns to view it with a glance,
Each moment feels a parent's love revive,

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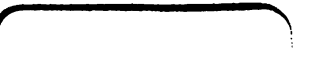
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